

# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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No. 1

## Joseph W. Yoder (1872-1956)

Joseph W. Yoder of Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, author of several widely read books on the Amish, lecturer, singer, and interpreter of the "plain people," died at the J. C. Blair Memorial Hospital in Huntingdon at five o'clock Tuesday morning, November 13, 1956, after an illness of several months. He had been ailing some since last winter in his Florida home, but he suffered almost no pain during his illness and death.

Joseph Warren Yoder was born in Belleville September 22, 1872, son of an Amish preacher, Christian Z. (b. 1837) and Rosanna McGonegal (b. 1837) Yoder.

He was the last surviving member of his family. His three brothers were: Yost (Amish) (1859-1930), of Belleville; Levi (1863-1943), Belleville manufacturer; and John (1866-1932), an industrialist of Goshen, Indiana. Joseph was married to Emily A. Lane of Lane's Mills on February 18, 1932. They lived at 1722 Mifflin Street, Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. He is survived by his wife.

Joseph received his formal education at the Brethren Normal School, now Juniata College, graduating from the Normal English program in 1895. Later he returned to receive a bachelor of arts degree in 1904.

During his undergraduate days at Juniata, Joseph was a member of the college's first "varsity quartet" which began its career at Allensville and Belleville in late 1902. The glee club, trained by the late Professor William Berry, gave a concert during Commencement week of 1904 with Joseph W. Yoder as director.

Intercollegiate debating began during this period and Joseph participated as a member of the Juniata team in its first debate with Susquehanna University, April 25, 1902. The question was: "Resolved, That the United States Should Hold Permanent Possession of the Philippines." Juniata upheld the negative and won the debate unanimously.

Joseph's versatile career started near Reedsville, Pennsylvania, as principal of Milroy High School in 1895. He served for two years. During his second year J. S. Coffman of Elkhart, Indiana, invited him to teach at the Elkhart Institute where he taught English and music for the 1897-98 term. He attended Northwestern University for the following academic year and in 1900 returned to Elkhart



Joseph W. Yoder (September 22, 1872, died November 13, 1956).

hart to teach Greek and English. He taught music and logic at Lock Haven Teachers College from 1906 to 1919. From 1904 he engaged in teacher institute work as Music Director, first in Pennsylvania, and also in Indiana, Illinois, and Virginia. He became one of the best-known educators among the schoolteachers of those states.

Because of his musical ability he was frequently sought to lead evangelistic singing for the Church of the Brethren, Methodists, and Mennonites. He also taught many music classes for these denominations, as well as for the River Brethren and the Amish Mennonites.

His connection with Juniata College extended over a period of many years. In conjunction with his teacher institute and evangelism work, he also held the employ of "high-school visitor." He spoke and sang to high-school assemblies and was considered most influential in bringing students to Juniata College.

He is recognized as the first appointed Athletic Director of Juniata College, serving for three years, 1901-04, while pursuing his bachelor's course.

It was during his service as Athletic

Director that the first Juniata College gymnasium was completed. Prior to that time he had conducted physical education classes in the basement of Students Hall.

"J. W.'s" chief fame, however, came in later years as an author. In 1940 he published his first book, *Rosanna of the Amish*, that told the story of his mother, an Irish infant who had been reared Amish. It is the most widely read of his several titles and is still the most intimate and authentic account of Amish family life.

His sequel, *Rosanna's Boys* (1949), penetrated deeper into the religious and social customs of the Amish as practiced in his own family. The first book was a biographical account, while the sequel dealt with the "boys," their problems, and the principles of the Amish way of life.

A third title, *Amish Traditions*, came off the press in late 1950. Addressed to the Amish themselves, it is a sincere effort to show the unscriptural causes of the many divisions.

*Amische Lieder* (1942) was the author's greatest contribution to musicology. In this book of 114 pages the author recorded on musical scales the tunes of the Mifflin County Amish as sung to the hymns in the *Ausbund*. He succeeded in getting many of the finest patriarchs to sing these tunes for him as he recorded the notes with a pencil in their homes. Since the Amish sang from memory, tunes in various communities of the Amish varied slightly. It was Joseph's fond ambition to record these tunes, publish them, and make them available to the Amish so their tunes would be unified. The author made a significant contribution that led not only to the study of Amish music but to the preservation of their oral tunes.

Joseph maintained his membership in the Amish (Mennonite) congregation at Belleville (Maple Grove Mennonite Church) where he had been baptized. In his book, *Amish Traditions*, he tells why he consistently kept his membership there. When he first entered Brethren Normal School (now Juniata College) in 1892, Dr. Martin G. Brumbaugh advised him to stay with the Amish: "Joseph, stick to your people."

The funeral service was held at two o'clock Thursday, November 15, 1956, at the Maple Grove Amish Mennonite Church at Belleville with four ministers



participating: A. J. Metzler, Scottdale, Pennsylvania, long-standing friend of Joseph and Publishing Agent of the Mennonite Publishing House; Bishop Aaron Mast, New Holland, Pennsylvania, former Belleville pastor; Jacob Weirich, pastor of the Maple Grove Mennonite Church; and Rev. J. Raymond Powell, of the Huntingdon Presbyterian Church. Burial was made in the Locust Grove Cemetery at Belleville.

The obituary was published in *The Daily News* (Huntingdon and Mt. Union, Pennsylvania) November 13, 1956. A more complete biography giving his contribution to literature and music deserves to be written.

—J. A. H.



The grade school attended by Joseph Yoder (the tall Amish boy in the back row) c. 1884.

## Preston Mennonite Church

BY VERDA KINZIE

From 1842 to 1953 the Hagey Mennonite Church was situated about a mile northwest of Preston, Ontario, at Hagey's Crossing. In the early days of settlement, many Hagey families were in the community. That is why the church was then called the Hagey Church. It is now called Preston Mennonite Church. At present there are only a few Hagey descendants in the community. Within four years' time there were two church fires. The first one was in January, 1950; the second one occurred in February, 1953.

By 1954 a new church was under construction, on a new site. It was built in a section which has recently been annexed to the town of Preston. No other church is situated in that section of town.

"The Hagey community is the oldest settlement of Mennonites in Waterloo County. Joseph Schoerg and Samuel Betzner were the first settlers who came from Pennsylvania in 1800 and located on the banks of the Grand River about three miles west of the Hagey Church. Other families soon came in . . . There was no meetinghouse until a number of years later and so meetings were held in the homes. The first meetinghouse was built at Berlin in 1813 . . . In 1842 the first Hagey Church was built on the present site."<sup>1</sup>

In 1896 the seating style was changed. In 1928 the basement was constructed, and the roof raised. Other general repair work was done.

On Sunday morning, January 15, 1950, it was discovered that the Hagey Church was on fire. The fire department responded with a truck and booster pump. Farmers and other volunteer helpers got trucks loaded with milk cans to bring water from the nearest hydrant. In this way firemen were able to keep their hoses going, and kept the blaze confined to the interior of the brick building. There was a large hole burnt in the floor and there was major damage from smoke, fire, and water.

The church had been renovated a short time before the fire, when a new furnace

had been installed. By July 2, 1950, the church was rebuilt. Many free work hours were given by the people of the community.

The dedication service of this new building was held Sunday, July 2, 1950. The building was filled to capacity. A congregation of nearly five hundred heard the service in the main auditorium, the Sunday-school auditorium in the basement, and through loud-speakers that delivered the messages to all those on the grounds. Bishop B. B. Shantz presented the high lights in the history of the church. J. Steckly, chairman of the building committee, thanked the committees and workers. Howard Good, pastor of the new edifice, thanked the Wanner Mennonite and Zion United Church for their assistance when they were homeless. Services had been held in these two churches while the new building was being erected.

On Thursday, February 19, 1953, the fire department was again called to a fire at Hagey's Church. Their efforts to save the church this time were fruitless. Only a skeleton of brick walls, twisted girders, piping and wiring, and charred embers remained of the church which had been reconstructed in 1950. The church had a Sunday-school attendance of about 130.

During the time of building, Sunday morning services were held in the Kindergarten School Auditorium, Preston. Other services were held in the Wanner church building and also conjoint with the Wanner Church at times. The new church was being built on land donated by E. G. Langs, adjacent to the new Coronation Public School on Concession Road, Preston.

Thanksgiving Day, October 12, 1953, was an important day in the history of the Hagey Mennonite Church. In an impressive ceremony, the cornerstone of the new church was laid. The chairman was Howard L. Good, who was ordained pastor of Hagey's in 1948. After the hymn, "Faith

of Our Fathers," followed a prayer of invocation by Merle Shantz, pastor of Wanner Mennonite Church. Bishop B. B. Shantz, who was ordained as minister at Hagey's in 1908, gave the Scripture reading and prayer.

Words of welcome were given by Ford I. Wilson, Mayor of Preston, and E. G. Langs, who generously donated eight lots for the building of the new church in Preston.

Bishop Roy S. Koch, acting moderator of the Mennonite Conference of Ontario, and pastor of St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, lowered the cornerstone. David Bechtel, one of the younger members of the church, presented the silver trowel to Bishop Koch.

George Hagey and Bruce Witmer, who were chosen because of their position in the rich tradition of the church, deposited the records in the stone. George Hagey's great-great-grandfather was ordained as second deacon at Hagey's in 1832. Bruce Witmer represents four generations and was one of the first presidents of the Mennonite Youth Fellowship.

Bishop Koch laid the cornerstone with the following words: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, we lay this stone of a building erected for the worship of God, for the evangelization of the lost, and for the edification of the saints."<sup>2</sup> The new church was named Preston Mennonite Church.

"Dedication services for the completed church building were held May 16, 1954. Bishop C. F. Derstine preached the dedication sermon and complimented the congregation for their determination to rebuild after two disastrous fires. The chairman of the building committee, J. Steckly, thanked everyone for their co-operation and extended special thanks to neighboring churches, local businessmen, and others for their contributions and for the encouragement they gave the people of the congregation during their misfortune.

"The congregation was able to build the church for approximately \$62,000.00, including donations, because of the kindness of L. A. Bechtel, a local builder, who



often supplied equipment for less than cost.

"A sentence from the dedication is appropriate: 'For the worship of God in prayer and praise; for the preaching of the Word; for the observance of Christian ordinances, with the prayer that it may be protected from *mishap and disaster*, we dedicate this house.'"<sup>3</sup>

Church services are usually held twice each Sunday. Sunday morning services begin at 10:00 a.m. The Sunday-school period is from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. At eleven the church service begins. The pastor is Howard L. Good.

The Hagey Sunday School was the first in the district to have a missionary superintendent. The aim was to get people more interested in missions and in savings boxes and quarter investments. The first missionary superintendent was Ida Gingrich Cressman in 1921.

In 1922 quarterly mission meetings were begun. There were special mission services held at the following churches: Wanner's, Snyder's, Breslau, and Hagey. Later Strasburg was added. The programs were planned to interest people in doing missionary work as well as to give the people the privilege of helping to support missionaries. It was possible to have a service at each of the churches about once a year. There has been a great interest in these services, and usually large crowds attend them.

A young people's Bible meeting was organized in 1907. At that early date meetings were held conjointly with the Wanner congregation every Sunday evening. Later each congregation had its own evening service.

In 1949 the Hagey Mennonite Youth Fellowship was organized. There are three commissions: (1) Faith and Practice, (2) Extension and Missions, and (3) Fellowship.

Several of the members, Jean Kinzie and James Burnett, wrote words for songs which were used at the inauguration service in October, 1950. Our first president of MYF was Donald Buschert, 1949.

The Faith and Practice Commission plans mission projects and singing at the Freeport Sanatorium. It is also responsible for planning to get the members organized to invite children to summer Bible school.

The Fellowship Commission is responsible for planning socials. They also plan for lunch at any youth activities.

In the fall of 1952-53 there were two children's clubs organized by MYF for those between the ages of 8 and 12. The boys were interested in woodcraft. The girls were engaged in various crafts.

With the money received from savings boxes, quarter investments, and offerings from the mission meetings the support of Sarah Esch, a missionary's child, was begun. This was continued until 1928. After 1928 Elvin Snyder, missionary to South America, was supported as long as he was on the field. In 1950 Edna Schmiedendorf

Hurst's support was undertaken by the five churches. She is our representative on the African field.

In the meantime the savings boxes were used in the support of Nancy Anne Hurst in 1943. She is a missionary's child from Africa.

Sometime after Marjorie Shantz was appointed as a missionary to Puerto Rico the Lord's Hour fund was started. A group of young and middle-aged people from the church decided to put aside one hour's wages a week for the support of a missionary. Marjorie Shantz, R.N., our representative to Puerto Rico, received this support. This is being continued now.

Hagey's has been a missionary church. Besides the foreign missionaries in Africa and Puerto Rico, there are missionaries and Christian workers in other fields of service. They are:

John Gingrich, pastor, Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Cora (Gingrich) Groh served at Toronto for a number of years.

Arnold Gingrich, pastor, Bothwell, Ontario, 1935.

Gladys (Shantz) Gingrich, Bothwell, Ontario.

Isobel (Schmiedendorf) Hurst, N. Ontario, 1941; later in Virginia.

Helen Lindhorst, Copper Cliff, Ontario.

Helen Witmer, R.N., served as relief worker in a hospital unit, Nazareth, Ethiopia, 1949-51. She is now Mrs.

J. Burkholder and is in Ethiopia again since January, 1956.

Mennonite aid in the community is nothing new.

"... The first account in this district was made between the deacons and the church in the year of Christ 1824, the 20th of November when the church voted the brethren mentioned below to gather in the union house to look over the accounts of the deacons from the time they were appointed and it was found that Jacob Bechtel had received £45 or \$112.50 alms in the year 1815, with a brother, by the name of Jacob Hershe, from Pennsylvania, Lancaster County, gave as a gift for the aid of the needy members of the congregation."<sup>4</sup>

"1839, June 8, \$14.65 alms money came into the hands of Jacob Hagey."<sup>5</sup> This was money that had been dropped into the alms box at the back of the church near the door.

In 1948 a Mennonite health benefit was organized in Ontario. It was named the Mennonite Benefit Association. "Benefits are offered under the four headings of: Hospitalization, Surgery, Disability, and Death Benefits."<sup>6</sup>

"The object of this organization shall be to systematically share in a Christian way the financial burdens of sickness, disability, and death and thereby perpetuate the historic Mennonite practice of mutual aid based on Biblical principles."<sup>7</sup>

"Assessments shall be levied annually and the amount shall be determined at the annual meeting of the association."<sup>8</sup>

"The Mennonite Aid Union had its in-

ception at a church conference held in Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario, in September, 1864. Authority was given for organization of a Union for Mutual Aid for those of its members who sustain loss through fire. . . .

"Records reveal that during years of operation, if misfortune befell a brother, which affected him or his family's financial structure, the brotherhood joined together for his assistance. Later it became apparent that a systematic collection of funds, on a mutual basis, was the preferable plan, with each church supplying a representative on the board of management. Under the blessing of God, the Aid Union provided a mutual form of assistance to the brotherhood, through a system of confining itself to church members, limiting its risks to nominal coverage, and practicing precautionary measures. The losses covered by Aid Union are: fire, storm, water, lightning, smoke, electricity."<sup>9</sup>

Ninety per cent of the members of the Preston congregation are taking advantage of this protection against losses.

The spiritual outlook is encouraging. Never have our people had more privileges to serve Christ and the church. There are summer Bible schools and summer camps at Chesley Lake.

Our church has done well to hold together through two church fires within three years' time. It is good to see the unity that still exists in spite of these trying years. People are taking a greater interest in the church, and more are remaining in the church than in previous years. Of course our Christian high schools and colleges have contributed toward this.

At the impressive cornerstone laying ceremony on Thanksgiving, October 12, the hymn, "The Solid Rock," was sung with deep feeling.<sup>10</sup>

Mabel Dunham has this to say of the Mennonites:

"It is characteristic of Mennonites that they hold in high esteem those of their own blood who have cleared the forests and plowed the first furrows. A memorial to the pioneers of Waterloo stands in the family graveyard of the Sherk and Betzner families, on elevated ground overlooking the river (Grand) and the bonnie village of Doon. It was erected in 1925, by the voluntary subscriptions of interested people. Built of native stone, it takes the form of a Swiss Chalet, supported by a circular tower, whose door faces the south and Pennsylvania. Its weather vane is worthy of note, a miniature Conestoga drawn by two teams of prancing horses.

"This monument epitomizes in stone the known history of the Mennonite people of the locality: Switzerland, Pennsylvania, the Conestoga wagon, the Grand River, the graves of the pioneers and a few nameless Indians. All this in a background of well-cultivated fields and beautiful trees."<sup>11</sup>

#### HISTORICAL DATA<sup>12</sup>

1800—FIRST Mennonite settlers in Waterloo County, Joseph Schoerg and



- Samuel Betzner, settled where Pioneer Memorial Tower now stands.
- 1840—FIRST Mennonite Sunday school in North America held here with Wanner's congregation.
- 1890—FIRST English sermon in Mennonite churches (in Waterloo County) preached here by Noah Stauffer.
- 1891—FIRST Sunday school (of the present order) in Ontario Conference District held here, Wanner's congregation participating.
- 1893—FIRST evangelistic meetings in Ontario Conference District held here by J. S. Coffman, evangelist.

#### *Dates of Ordination and Office*

- 1804—Joseph Bechtel, Minister  
 1815—Abraham L. Clemens, Deacon  
 1832—Jacob Hagey, Deacon  
 1838—David Sherk, Minister  
 1844—Joseph Hagey, Minister  
 1851—Joseph Hagey, Bishop  
 1878—Jacob B. Gingrich, Minister  
 1889—Abraham Oberholtzer, Deacon  
 1902—David Wismer, Minister  
 1907—Daniel Shantz, Deacon  
 1908—Benjamin Shantz, Minister  
 1939—Benjamin Shantz, Bishop  
 1944—Chester Buschert, Deacon  
 1947—Amos Martin, Deacon  
 1948—Howard L. Good, Minister

#### *The Building*

- 1835—A union meetinghouse built on the grounds south of present building.
- 1842—Church building erected.
- 1896—The seating was changed from the raised style to the floor plan.
- 1928—Basement constructed, roof raised, new seating, and general repairs.
- 1950—January 15, fire destroyed the interior and furniture. July 2, dedication of renewed and enlarged structure.
- 1953—February 19, fire destroyed the building.
- 1953—October 12, Thanksgiving Day, cornerstone laying ceremony for the new Preston Mennonite Church.
- 1954—May 16, dedication of the new Preston Mennonite Church.

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- Dunham, Mabel. *Grand River*. Toronto, Ontario: McClelland and Steward, 1945.
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*The Evening Reporter*. Galt, Ontario, February 19, 1953.  
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 Program, Hagey Mennonite Church, July 2, 1950.  
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Mennonite Benefit Association, General Information and By-Laws, Ontario, 1948.

#### *Footnotes*

- <sup>1</sup> L. J. Burkholder, *Mennonites in Ontario*, pp. 82, 83.  
<sup>2</sup> Program of Preston Mennonite Church, October 12, 1953.  
<sup>3</sup> H. Good, Preston, Ontario.  
<sup>4</sup> From a paper in the Old Deacon's Book at Hagey's.  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Mennonite Benefit Association, General Information and By-Laws, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Constitution of the Mennonite Aid Union, 1949, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> J. D. Brunk, "The Solid Rock," *Church Hymnal*, p. 257.

<sup>11</sup> Dunham, Mabel, *Grand River*, p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> Dedication Service Program, July 2, 1950.

## Mennonite Reader Interests (1864-1908)

JOHN A. HOSTETLER

Every publishing institution has a well-defined group of readers it aims to serve. No publishing firm, private or church-owned, could long survive without such a reader audience. Little has been written on the development of Mennonite reader interests in all of the recent research. What did the average family possess in the way of reading material one hundred years ago? Why did Mennonite readers and leaders think they needed a publishing house? What were some of the factors that nurtured the increased interest in reading?

The following bibliography is intended as an aid in answering these questions. This list is a result of a careful search through the *Herald of Truth* for articles and items that reflect general interest in literature: the need for good literature, warning against harmful literature, and articles that reflect leadership in developing a Mennonite literature. Complete sets of back issues of the *Herald of Truth* are located in the Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen, Indiana, and Scottdale, Pennsylvania.

- "Bad Books," February, 1864, p. 8.  
 "The Art of Writing a Great Privilege," "JMB" (John M. Brennenman), October, 1864, p. 52.  
 "Novel Reading," September, 1866, p. 74. Unfavorable.  
 "Books and Reading," Maria B. Esben-shade, November, 1867, pp. 166-67.  
 "Writing Poetry," November, 1869, p. 1268.  
 "The Books Our Children Read," Daniel Hill, February, 1871, pp. 17-18.  
 "What Do You Read?" Burkholder, H. D. Sterling, *Ed.*, February, 1873, p. 34.  
 "Obscene Literature," Anon., April, 1873, p. 77.  
 "The Publication of Religious Literature" (signed) "J.", April, 1873, p. 68.  
 "Books of the Day," September, 1874, p. 157. (Reprint) *Educator*.  
 "How and What to Read," Anon., October, 1874, p. 174.  
 "What Do You Read?" Anon., November, 1874, p. 183.  
 "The Printing of the German Martyrs' Mirror in Ephrata," Anon., 1878, p. 15.  
 "Novel Reading," J. H. M. in the *Brethren at Work*, August, 1878, p. 142.

"Furnish the Children with Reading Matter," by A Friend of the Children, November, 1879, p. 213.

"Novel Reading" (reprint) *Friends Review*, September, 1879, pp. 175-76.

"Our Bookstore," Editorial, October, 1889, p. 182.

"The Children's Reading," J. W. L. in *The Friend*, August 15, 1882, p. 251.

"A Good Old Custom," Anon., October 1, 1882. (Providing each of the children with a family Bible, hymnbook, prayerbook, and *Martyrs' Mirror*.)

"Libraries," Samuel S. Herner, May 1, 1884, p. 131.

"Spreading the Gospel by Means of a Printing Press," Editorial, July 15, 1885, p. 217.

"Poison Among Books," Sel., February 1, 1888, p. 39.

"The German Herald and Mennonite History," Editorial, May 1, 1888, p. 136.

Editorial on Publishing Sunday School Helps at a Loss, May 15, 1891, p. 153.

"Novel-killed," Sel., July 15, 1891, p. 221.

"Literature for Young People," Abr. Ebersole, C. H. Brunk, December 1, 1892, pp. 353-54, 355-56.

"The Power of Literature," Anon., March 1, 1894, pp. 69-71, and March 15, 1894, pp. 84-85.

"Mennonite Literature," J. F. Funk, January 15, 1896, pp. 18-19.

"Mennonite Periodicals" (a long list), February 1, 1896, p. 48.

"Circulating Our Own Literature," J. B. Kanagy, April 15, 1896, p. 124. Reprint from *Evangelical Messenger*.

Editorial, March 1, 1897, p. 66.

"Means of Disseminating Gospel Truths," John F. Funk, April 1, 1897, p. 98.

"Our Intellectual Storehouse," by a Bookman (John F. Funk?), December 1, 1897, pp. 356-57.

"Selecting Books and Papers," John F. Funk, February 1, 1899, p. 35.

"Old Books," John F. Funk, December 1, 1899, pp. 357-58. Deals with the historical library of the Mennonite Publishing Company with a long history of *Martyrs' Mirror*.

Editorial, "To Our Brethren in the Ministry," January 15, 1899, p. 18.

"Warning," Editorial, on Adventist literature, February 1, 1899, p. 34.

"A Statement from Our Business Manager" (about financial aspects), February 15, 1899, p. 50.  
 "The Value of Books," advertisement of Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart (short item), March 1, 1900, p. 80 (also appeared in later issue).  
 "Articles for the Herald," Editorial. An appeal for material, and for simple writing. Answers criticism of too difficult language, June 1, 1900, p. 163.  
 "What Books and Papers Do Your Boys and Girls Read?" Anon., June 15, 1900, pp. 181-82.  
 "Mennonite History," Editorial by Funk, November 1, 1900, p. 322 (on history content).  
 "Johann Gutenberg," reprint of an article in *The Independent*, June 15, 1901, p. 190.  
 See *Herald of Truth* for Editorial on C.

H. Smith searching the files at Elkhart, and his general plan for writing a history (September 8, 1904).  
 "A Warning," S. D. Troyer, October 20, 1904, p. 362 (on tract distribution).  
 "Bad Literature," Adelia May Stoner, January 5, 1905, p. 6 (well written).  
 "Thoughts on Books," by a Brother, May 10, 1906, p. 167.  
 Editorial on reading material, by "F" (Funk), August 9, 1906, pp. 291-92. In the same issue: I. R. Detweiler, "Missionary Literature."  
 "Old and Rare Books," November 22, 1906, p. 441.  
 "Religious Literature of Today, Its Influence for Good," Margaret Rickert, September 5, 1907, p. 327.  
 "Mennonite Libraries," C. Henry Smith, January 3, 1907, pp. 2-3.

should attend public worship at least once on each Sabbath day.

11. Loafing about any part of the building during working hours will not be permitted, and any of the employees of the house having occasion to go to or pass through any other department, must not spend unnecessary time, nor in anyway interfere with such department, nor stop to gossip with the employees of such department about things which do not concern them, but must without unnecessary delay return to their own business.

12. Order must be preserved throughout all the different departments, stock be kept in its proper place and in proper order, and not left laying around loose to be soiled and otherwise injured. Tools and other articles, when used, must be returned to their proper places and kept there. The rooms must also be kept clean and in order by those having charge of them.

13. Every employee must make his business and the things connected with his department, his special study; endeavor to promote the interest of the company in every respect and make himself useful in every way that he can. We have no room for idlers or for that false dignity which is afraid of active effort, energetic labor, and soiled hands.

14. Any omission or disregard of the foregoing rules will be considered a sufficient cause for a discharge without further notice.

—From unpublished papers, *Funk Collection* Archives of the Mennonite Church.

## Rules of Order for Employees

*Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana, 1877*

The employees of the house will be required to give strict attention to the observing of the following rules:

1. All employees must be in their places and ready for business at the hour of commencing work both in the morning and at noon, and must remain until the hours of quitting, unless by special permission from the foreman or proprietors.

2. Ten hours will be considered a day's work, and the company expects ten full hours of every employee, and every employee absenting himself during working hours without permission will be charged with the time that he so absented himself.

3. All unnecessary conversation between the employees during working hours *must positively* be avoided.

4. No unnecessary noise in the working rooms, boisterous talking, whistling, singing, slamming the doors, etc., will be allowed.

5. No employee of the office will be allowed to follow any outside business unless by special permission. Every employee will be required to give strict attention and his whole attention to the business of the office and the particular duties assigned him. Carelessness or inattention to business will not be tolerated.

6. No obscene talk, profane language, etc., must be indulged in.

7. Smoking, chewing tobacco, and the use of intoxicating liquors is positively prohibited, and the places of employees who use tobacco will be supplied by others, as soon as suitable men, free from the disagreeable habit, can be obtained.

8. Every employee will be expected to conduct himself with politeness and respect to his superiors, to his fellow employees, and especially to customers or strangers.

9. The store, office, and other parts of the building must be kept closed on the Sabbath, so far as it is not absolutely necessary for the keeping up of the fires or otherwise to the preservation of the machinery or other property.

10. All employees will be required to observe a due respect for the Sabbath and it is desired that all without exception

## Charter of the Mennonite Publishing Company

Articles of Association of the Mennonite Publishing Company, Located at Elkhart, Elkhart County and State of Indiana.

1. Know all men by these presents, that we the undersigned residents of the City of Elkhart, Elkhart County and State of Indiana, do hereby associate ourselves together under the general Laws of the State of Indiana, for the purpose of forming a Corporation to carry on a general Printing, Publishing, Book Binding, and Book Sellers Business, and other Business incident thereto.

2. The name and style of the Company shall be the "Mennonite Publishing Company."

3. The Capital Stock of the Company shall be thirty thousand dollars, with the privilege hereafter of adding to said Capital Stock twenty thousand dollars.

4. The Capital Stock shall be divided into shares of twenty-five dollars each, transferrable only upon the books of said Company.

5. The term of the existence of said Company shall be fifty years.

6. There shall be three Directors of said Company the first year with the privilege of increasing their number to five, and the names of the Directors for the first year shall be as follows: John F.

Funk, A. K. Funk, and Joseph Summers.

7. If at anytime there shall be any stock for sale, preference shall be given to some of the members of the Company.

We the undersigned do hereby certify the foregoing to be the articles of association of said Company.

As witness our hands and seals this 27th day of April 1875.

John F. Funk  
 A. K. Funk  
 Joseph Summers

State of Indiana, Elkhart County, Before me George M. Best a Notary Public in and for Said County on this 27th day of April 1875 personally appeared John F. Funk, A. K. Funk, and Joseph Summers and acknowledged the execution of the annexed articles of corporation to be their act and deed. In witness whereof I have set my hand and Notarial Seal.

George M. Best  
 Notary Public

FILED  
 APR 30 1875  
 John E. Neff  
 Secy of State

(Note: The above charter filed with the Secretary of State (of Indiana)



formed the base of operations of the Mennonite Publishing Company of Elkhart, Indiana. The company sold its Mennonite interests to the Mennonite Publication Board in 1908, but the President of the Company, John F. Funk, outlived the fifty-year life of the charter and died on January 9, 1930.—Ed.)

## News Notes

The following items of interest occurring during 1956 are taken from various sources, chief of which is the "News and Notes" release submitted by the Mennonite Research Foundation, Goshen, Indiana, of which Guy F. Hershberger is Acting Director. All persons, Conference Historians in particular, are invited to send news items at any time to the editor.

The Iowa-Nebraska Conference in session August 28-31, 1956, appointed John W. Gingerich, Kalona, Iowa, as their Conference Historian for a term of five years.

The Pennsylvania German Society (organized 1890) is planning for a conjoint annual meeting with the Westmoreland-Fayette Historical Society at Scottdale, Pennsylvania, in the fall of 1957.

Dr. Charles P. Loomis, Head of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Michigan State University, spent two days with John A. Hostetler of Scottdale, Pennsylvania, visiting Amish communities in Pennsylvania, early in December, 1956. Loomis who is coauthor with J. Allen Beagle of *Rural Social Systems* (Prentice-Hall, 1950) is interested in further anthropological studies among the Amish and the Mennonites.

In the *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (hereafter cited as *MQR*) (January, 1956) H. S. Bender reports on "New Discoveries of Important Sixteenth Century Anabaptist Codices" at Langnau and Bern, Switzerland, which he describes as "the most noteworthy discoveries of Anabaptist writings since the discovery of the Hutterite *Geschichtsbuch*" published by Rudolf Wolkan in 1923. Bender's paper, "The Pacifism of the Sixteenth Century Anabaptists," read before the American Society of Church History, December 28, 1954, was published in *Church History* (June, 1955), and reprinted in the *MQR* (January, 1956). During 1954-55 Bender was president of the American Society for Reformation Research.

The *MQR* (April, 1956) has an article by Fritz Braun giving a list of "Nineteenth Century Emigrants from the Mennonite Congregation of Friedelsheim in the Palatinate."

The *MQR* (January, 1956) has two articles on the Mennonites of Balk, Friesland, who settled southwest of Goshen, Indiana, in 1853. The authors are Carl F.

Brüsewitz of Utrecht, and Marie A. Yoder of Goshen, Indiana.

Albert Buckwalter has an article, "Building the Church Among the Toba Indians," in the *MQR* (October, 1955).

The *MQR* (July, 1956) has an article by Paul Peachey on "Anabaptism and Church Organization." Peachey is also supervising a program of research on social change in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.

John Umble has an article, "David A. Schneck's Notes on the History of the Sonnenberg (Ohio) Swiss Mennonite Congregation," in the *MQR* (October, 1955). He has also recently completed a manuscript on the history of the Oak Grove-Pleasant Hill congregation in Wayne County, Ohio.

N. van der Zijpp of Rotterdam has an article on "The Confessions of Faith of the Dutch Mennonites" in the *MQR* (July, 1955).

Don Yoder, Pennsylvania Dutch Folklore Center, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has edited the letters of Johannes and Katharina Risser, nineteenth-century immigrants from the Palatinate to America. The letters are published in the *MQR* (January, 1956).

J. Lawrence Burkholder, Goshen College, doctoral candidate at Princeton Theological Seminary, is writing a dissertation on the "Evaluation of the Mennonite Conception of Social Responsibilities in the Light of the Responsible Society."

Howard H. Charles, Goshen College, doctoral candidate at the University of Edinburgh, is writing a dissertation on "The Charismatic Life in the Apostolic Church."

Rosella Reimer Duerksen, Bethel College, has completed a dissertation (Union Theological Seminary) on the Anabaptist hymnody of the sixteenth century.

Wilhelm Dyck, doctoral candidate at the University of Michigan, is writing a dissertation on the novels of Joseph Ponten dealing with the German population, including the Mennonites, in Russia.

Mary Eleanor Bender, Goshen College, doctoral candidate at Indiana University, is writing her dissertation on "The Anabaptist Theme in Twentieth Century German Literature."

Heinold Fast, Emden, Germany, is writing a doctoral dissertation on Heinrich Bullinger (Zwingli's successor in Zurich), including his attitude toward the Anabaptists. The (April, 1956) *MQR* contains his article, "The Dependence of the First Anabaptists on Luther, Erasmus, and Zwingli."

Walter Fellman, Meckesheim, Germany, has prepared an edition of the writings of Hans Denck for publication.

Among the articles by Robert Friedmann appearing in the *MQR* during the past two years are: "Christian Sectarians in Thessalonica and Their Relation to the Anabaptists" (January, 1955); "Claus

Felbinger's Confession of 1560" and "The Oldest Church Discipline of the Anabaptists" (April, 1955). "Recent Interpretations of Anabaptism" appears in *Church History* (June, 1955).

Gerhard Goeters, Wickrathberg, Germany, has completed a dissertation (University of Zürich) on Ludwig Haetzer, and is now collecting source materials along the German Lower Rhine. The *MQR* (October, 1955) published his article, "Ludwig Haetzer, a Marginal Anabaptist."

"Culture for Service" is the title of Paul Mininger's inaugural address as president of Goshen College, published in the *MQR* (January, 1955). This is a comprehensive statement of a Christian philosophy of education, with an Anabaptist orientation. It is in large measure a summary of Mininger's 1952 Conrad Grebel lectures on "The Foundations of Christian Education."

The 1954 Conrad Grebel lectures by Guy F. Hershberger are to be published with the title, *The Way of the Cross in Human Relations*. A section of the lectures has appeared in an article, "The Modern Social Gospel and the Way of the Cross," *MQR* (April, 1955). Gideon G. Yoder has delivered the 1956 lectures on "The Nurture and Evangelism of Children," and Chester K. Lehman is scheduled to give the 1957 lectures which will deal with the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and sanctification. H. S. Bender has been assigned the lectureship for 1958 on the subject of the church.

Mary Jane Hershey, Souderon, Pennsylvania, is writing a thesis on the costumes of Mennonites in Eastern Pennsylvania at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia.

Rupert Hohmann, Bethel College, doctoral candidate at Northwestern University, is writing a dissertation on "The Amish and Their Music."

Irvin B. Horst, Eastern Mennonite College, doctoral candidate at the University of Amsterdam, has completed his dissertation on Anabaptism in England.

B. B. Janz and J. G. Rempel are writing the history of the coming of the Mennonites to Canada after World War I.

J. Howard Kauffman, Goshen College, has completed the basic research for his doctoral dissertation, "A Comparative Study of Traditional and Emergent Forms of Family Life Among Midwest Mennonites." Kauffman has an article, "Toward a Sociology of Mennonites," in the *MQR* (July, 1956). This includes a bibliography of 400 items and 181 topics for research classified under 21 heads. Reprints of the article may be obtained from the author.

C. Norman Kraus, Goshen College, has completed a Th.M. thesis (Princeton Theological Seminary) on "An Historical Analysis of Present-Day Dispensationalism."

Robert Kreider, Bluffton College, delivered the 1955 Menno Simons lectures at



Bethel College on the general theme, "Anabaptism Speaks to Our Day." Kreider also has an article, "The Anabaptists and the Civil Authorities of Strasbourg," in *Church History* (June, 1955).

Walter Lehn, doctoral candidate in linguistics at Cornell University, has as the theme for his dissertation a descriptive and historical study of the Low German dialect spoken in the Mennonite village of Rosental in the Altkolonie in South Russia.

The Historical Committee of the Ohio and Eastern Mennonite Conference is sponsoring the writing of a history of that conference. The committee consists of Gerald C. Studer, Orland R. Grieser, Vernon Kennel, Loren S. King, and Mahlon O. Krabill. Walter E. Oswald and John S. Umble are designated as compilers-writers.

John S. Oyer, Goshen College, doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, is writing his dissertation on "The Lutheran Reformers and the Anabaptists."

Roman Gingerich, Goshen College, doctoral candidate at Indiana University, is writing a dissertation on "A Comparison of the Physical Education Programs of Church-related Colleges in Indiana."

Former president of Tabor College, Frank C. Peters, doctoral candidate at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, is writing a dissertation on the educational work of the Mennonite Brethren Church.

Howard Raid, Bluffton College, has conducted a census of Mennonite businessmen of the Central, Middle, and Eastern District Conferences of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Calvin Redekop, Hesston College, has an unpublished M.A. thesis (University of Minnesota) on "The Cultural Assimilation of the Mennonites of Mountain Lake, Minnesota" (1955). He is pursuing further studies at the University of Chicago.

Martin H. Schrag, Goshen College, has an unpublished Th.M. thesis (Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary) on "European History of the Swiss, Volhynian, Mennonite Ancestors of Mennonites Now Living in Communities in Kansas and South Dakota."

Don Smucker, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, is writing his dissertation on the theology of Walter Rauschenbusch.

Clarence R. Stuffle has written a thesis (Indiana State Teachers College) on "Comparison of the Adjustment of Amish and non-Amish Children in Van Buren Township Schools."

J. A. Toews, president of the Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Winnipeg, is writing an M.A. thesis (University of Manitoba) on "Alternative Service During the Second World War."

John D. Unruh, Freeman College, is writing the history of the Mennonites of South Dakota.

Silas Hertzler, Goshen College, is engaged in research on the teachings of the Mennonites on the oath.

John C. Wenger, Goshen College, is writing a history of the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.

Paul W. Wohlegemuth has an unpublished doctoral dissertation (University of Southern California, 1956) on "Mennonite Hymnals Published in the English Language."

The Historical Committee of the Mennonite Church has purchased extensive microfilm copies of records in the National Archives, Washington, D.C., and in the state archives of Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Nebraska, relating to the history of the Mennonites during World War I. The materials microfilmed were selected by Guy F. Hershberger and are housed in the Mennonite Church Archives.

Willard Conrad began his term of service as Archivist of the Mennonite Church Archives during the summer of 1956. He is working under the direction of Nelson P. Springer, Acting Custodian.

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#### *Mennonite Research Foundation*

The Annual Report of the Mennonite Research Foundation is available upon request from the Foundation at 1613 South Eighth Street. The report lists the research projects thus far approved, and the status of each is explained. The report also includes some important recommendations for the future.

The Mennonite family census (1950) continues to be useful as a source of research projects. During the past two years the following studies have been based on the census. Summaries of the studies are given in the "Exhibit" section of the Annual Report (1956) of the Mennonite Research Foundation.

(1) "Mobility Among the Mennonites of Ohio," by John R. Smucker.

(2) "Occupations and Education of Mennonite Men and Women in Five Conference Districts," by Ila Eichelberger.

(3) "Mennonite Women: A Study of Three Areas Related to Marriage and the Family," by Amy L. Hunsberger.

(4) "Residence and Home Ownership of Mennonites," by Norwood Schmucker.

Projects which have utilized other source materials of the Research Foundation are the following (summaries in the 1956 Annual Report):

(1) "A Study of Unmarried Mennonite Women in Three Conference Districts," by Anna Bontrager.

(2) "Christian Ethical Problems of Mennonite Businesses," by David C. Leatherman, using a questionnaire sent to a group of business firms listed in the Foundation's *Directory of Mennonite Employers*.

(3) "Mennonite Businesses and Public Accountancy Services," by James Peachey.

(4) "A Report of the 1954 Draft Census," by Melvin Gingerich.

(5) "Analysis of the Draft Census of the Franconia, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan, Ohio, South Central, and Pacific Conferences."

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#### *New Books*

Volume I of *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* was published in November, 1955. It includes letters A to C, articles "Aachen" to "Cyprian," 749 pages of text and 47 pages of illustrations besides numerous maps. More than 450 authors contributed articles which range in length from a few lines to several pages. Harold S. Bender is the editor and Cornelius Krahn, associate editor. Elizabeth Horsch Bender as editorial assistant contributes invaluable service to the project. Until August 31, 1955, Melvin Gingerich, the director of the Research of the Mennonite Research Foundation, had also served as managing editor of the Encyclopedia.

Volume II, including letters D to H, was off the press in December, 1956. There are 886 pages plus a pictorial supplement of 23 pages. The price of Volume II is \$11.00, and the entire set of four volumes (two more to follow) is still \$38.50.

*Mennonite Handbook*, Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, is the title of a 159 page paper-bound booklet edited by John C. Wenger. It contains a variety of documents important to the conference.

*The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, translated from the Dutch by Leonard Verduin; edited by John C. Wenger; biography by Harold S. Bender (Herald Press, 1956); 1,092 pages; illustrated.

*The Proceedings of the Tenth Conference on Mennonite Educational and Cultural Problems* held at Mennonite Biblical Seminary, June 16-17, 1955, is now in print. Copies available from J. Winfield Fretz, North Newton, Kansas.

Reimer, Gustav E., and Gaeddert, G. R., *Exiled by the Czar: Cornelius Janzen and the Great Mennonite Migration, 1874* (Mennonite Publication Office, Newton, Kansas, 1956), 205 pp.

*The Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids), 2 Vols. An extension of *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*. The Encyclopedia includes at least 17 articles on Mennonite themes. Among contributors are Harold S. Bender, Melvin Gingerich, and Cornelius Krahn.

*The Amish Year*, by Charles S. Rice (Photographer) and Rollin C. Steinmetz (Rutgers University Press, 1956), 224 pp.

Melvin Gingerich is writing a manuscript on the Mennonites for translation into Japanese.

## A Visit to the Ontario A.M. Conference

J. C. WENGER

### Precious Christian Fellowship

All of us have had the pleasure of meeting new Christian friends and tremendously enjoying the experience. This was the privilege of the writer June 11-13, 1956, when he was with the Ontario Amish Mennonites for seven services. These people have been in Ontario for about 125 years, and for the first 110 years they were solidly German. Within the last 15 years they have changed from German to English in all their services with but few exceptions. They had no conference organization until 1924. Today they are indistinguishable from our (old) Mennonite Church. On Monday night the Mennonite Hour pastor and the male quartet gave a splendid program in their Steinman

Church. Tuesday and Wednesday their conference sessions were held in the Poole Church. The moderator is a fine brother named Henry Yantzi (pronounced Yahn-tsee), and their conference secretary is Elmer Schwartzentruber, a cousin of Amos Swartzentruber of Argentina. Ordinarily their singing is in English, but at this conference they honored one of their oldest leaders, Bishop Daniel S. Jutzi, by singing a German hymn, *O wie koestlich und wie edel ist die wahre Religion* (Oh, how precious and how noble is true religion). Brother Jutzi was born in 1873, was ordained a deacon in 1902, a preacher in 1914, and a bishop in 1917. The aged pilgrim with Amish beard, his hooks and eyes, and his frock coat, looked like a saint from another era as he trem-

bled with emotion and the tears flowed while the church sang German to honor him. No one would want him to change one iota. At 83 the old patriarch looks just right as he is. In the evening the writer asked if the congregation would not sing the old hymn, *O Gott Vater, wir loben Dich* (O God our Father, Thee we praise), the ancient hymn which is sung traditionally in every Amish Mennonite service. And how they did sing it! It took the writer back to his boyhood in the Rockhill Mennonite Church near Telford, Pennsylvania, where this hymn was often sung. God grant that as we lose the German, and other changes come with the years, we may still maintain the simple and nonresistant faith of Christ in this secular and worldly age!

## Ordination Anniversary

CHESTER C. GRAYBILL

On Sunday, November 18, 1956, a unique meeting was held at Lauver's Mennonite Church marking the fiftieth anniversary of the ordination of Bro. W. W. Graybill to the office of bishop.

Services were marked by a historical message by Bro. Ira D. Landis on the history of the Mennonite churches of Juniata and Snyder counties from the coming of the pioneer Mennonite settler in 1774 until fifty years ago and by a message recalling the events of the past fifty years as a bishop by Bro. W. W. Graybill. Interest was manifested by a crowded house and by many former residents being present to share in the commemoration service. Bro. Landis gave the Scriptural sanction for such a meeting from the instance of Mary of Bethany being commended for her work and faithful labors while yet living, "She hath done what she could."

Bro. Graybill spoke of God's great goodness in permitting him to serve the past fifty years, which in retrospect seemed to be but a short time. He referred to the fact that this meeting was significant since it was at Lauver's Church that he confessed Christ at the age of six-

teen years during a series of meetings held by Bro. A. D. Wenger. It was here that he was baptized and later ordained to the ministry in 1904 and to the bishop office on November 13, 1906. Bro. Graybill in reviewing the work of the past fifty years referred to the changes which have occurred in the district, noting especially the church at Susquehanna with a membership of eight members to the growing church of the present day, and the bishop board of the conference numbering eight

at that time to twenty-two at the present time.

Bro. Graybill assisted by Bro. Donald Lauver continues to take an interest in the work of the church as well as her outreach in areas beyond, the churches at Buffalo Valley and Locust Grove being served by these brethren.

Testimonies were given in the evening service by two of his collaborators, Bro. Noah W. Risser and Bro. Henry E. Lutz. Three generations of the W. W. Graybill family were represented by taking some part in the services, his son Walter Graybill and a grandson Earl Graybill both being ordained.—*Pastoral Messenger*.

## Heimatstelle Pfalz

Dr. Fritz Braun, Stiftsplatz 5, Kaiserslautern, Pfalz, Germany, who had an article in the (April, 1956) *MQR*, is director of a research center in the Palatinate known as *Heimatstelle Pfalz*. Dr. Braun's research interests include the history of family names in the Palatinate and the study of folk culture.

At the present time Braun is searching for information on Johannes Franz Lat-

scha (Latschar), an immigrant of 1728 who settled in Berks County, Pa. Anyone knowing the officers of the Latschar family reunion would do Dr. Braun a favor by sending such information to him. American Mennonite genealogists and families interested in searching European sources would do well to write to Dr. Braun for information on any family name he may have in his extensive files.



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

Published quarterly by the Historical Committee of Mennonite General Conference at Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, and distributed to the members of Mennonite Historical Association. **Editor:** John A. Hostetter; **Assistant Editor:** Nelson P. Springer; **Associate Editors:** H. S. Bender, Ernest R. Clemens, Melvin Gingerich, I. B. Horst, Ira D. Landis, Harold Bauman, Paul Peachey, Gideon G. Yoder, J. C. Wenger, S. S. Wenger, Grant Stoltzfus. Dues for regular membership (\$1.50 per year) or for sustaining membership (\$5.00 or more annually) may be sent to the treasurer of the Association, Ira D. Landis, R. 1, Bareville, Pennsylvania. Articles and news items may be addressed to the editor.

Vol. XVIII

April, 1957

No. 2

## Peter Basinger (1812-1901)

BY WILMER SWOPE

The parents of Peter were Christian Boesiger, born March 7, 1779, and Verena Schumacher Boesiger, born June 17, 1787. Both were from Belfort, France. On Feb. 5, 1810, they were united in marriage by Daniel Steiner, at Belfort, France. Their son Peter Basinger was born on Oct. 15, 1812, in Alsace-Lorraine, France. In 1820 the Christian Boesiger family emigrated to America, landing at Alexandria, Virginia. The passage was made by sailing ship, which required two months. They settled in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, a little west of Dry River near Dayton, Virginia.

In 1833 Peter went to Mahoning County, Ohio, where in 1835 he married Maria Blosser (born Dec. 24, 1804, died April 24, 1884), formerly of Page County, Virginia.

In 1854 the Columbiana-Mahoning congregation (with three church houses) was in need of a minister. In 1848 two ministers, Jacob Christophel and Jacob Wisler, had moved to Indiana, minister Henry Stauffer died in 1851, minister Rudolph Blosser, brother-in-law to Peter Basinger, died in 1852. This left two aged ministers, John Blosser and John Shank (also formerly from Virginia), and one young minister, Samuel Good, who later left with the Wisler group.

The congregation met at Oberholser's (now Midway) to select candidates for the ministry. Upon hearing his name announced among the candidates, Peter got up and hurried outside to escape the lot. The ministers hurried after him and reached him just as he was mounting his horse to ride away. The ministers brought him into the church again. When the lot was cast it fell on Peter to be a minister of the Gospel. He served from 1854 until his death on Feb. 22, 1901.

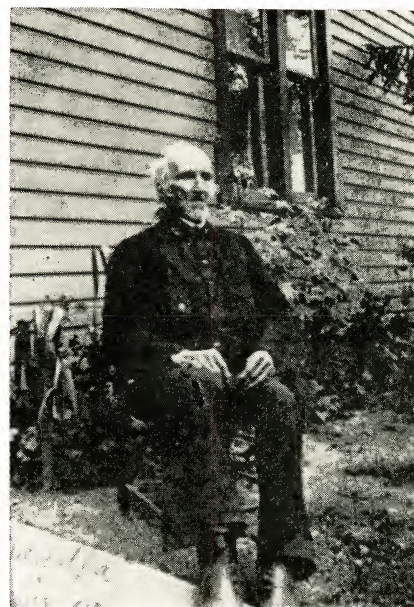
It is said that he did not desire to be a preacher, and that when he would preach, he turned his face upward toward the ceiling, and would sometimes preach with his eyes closed. He gave the longest term of service in the ministry in the Columbiana-Mahoning church. He served in the ministry for 47 years; his last sermon was preached at Midway four weeks before his death. He was the last minister in the congregation to preach exclusively in

the German language. He was very strict on attire and wore a plain coat; he was also opposed to having his picture taken. One of the maxims which he used in his sermons was, "They say this doesn't matter and that doesn't matter, after while nothing matters."

He read and spoke German and French fluently, and was well versed in topics of the day. He was regarded by everyone as an upright and honest Christian man. He was father to eleven children including twin girls, and one orphaned granddaughter. At present one great-grandson is in the ministry, Caleb Yoder, who is deacon at the Midway Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

The funeral services were conducted by Ira Buchwalter, Dalton, Ohio, Allen Rickert of the home church, and Albert W. Harrold of the neighboring Zion Hill Brethren Church. Thus ended the life labors of this humble and pious minister of the Gospel.

Leetonia, Ohio.



## Farewell Letter of Jacob Gross

SUPPLIED BY WILMER SWOPE

This letter by Jacob Gross (1743-1810) was found in Valentine Nold's family Bible brought to Columbiana County, Ohio, in 1817 by Bishop Jacob Nold, formerly of the Swamp congregation in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. The letter was translated into English by Harold S. Bender. The original letter in German has been sent to the Mennonite Archives, Goshen, Indiana, through the generosity of Mrs. Lester Mellinger, who is a descendant of Bishop Nold. This letter by Bishop Jacob Gross is to be preserved in the Archives in trust for the Franconia Mennonite Conference. The letter reads:

"A few last loving words to the entire church, especially that which I must now take leave of, and among which I have served although as unworthy minister of the Word, in the district of Deep Run, Brckensen, New Britain. Dear Brethren and Sisters, especially, to you, but also to others who are not members, I have a de-

sire to embrace you all with love. You who are bought with a precious price, it grieves me to have to leave you in such a condition, of which the Lord speaks when He says that unrighteousness will increase and the love of many will wax cold, but whoever remains faithful unto the end, that one will be saved. Oh, love, oh love of God which we cannot do without, oh love for God and His Word, love for friend and enemy. But oh, thou love of the world, what power thou hast attained among old and young. Oh love of the world, oh lust of the eye, lust of the flesh, oh pride of life, how you have increased! Good night, for this is the last address from a dying hand; repent and come more diligently to the meeting to hear. Honor those who are in authority over you so that you and they will become strong. If this is not done your candlestick will be taken away."

(Signed)

Jacob Gross.



## An Account of the Beginnings of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference

BY ELLROSE D. ZOOK

The following is an account of the events leading up to the organization of the Allegheny (formerly Southwestern Pennsylvania) Mennonite Conference as taken from the records of J. N. Durr, bishop of the Masontown Mennonite Church and first moderator of the new conference. Except for minor editorial corrections the account is given here verbatim from the Durr record.

In 1873 Bishop Nicholas Johnson died. He had been the bishop of the Masontown congregation in Fayette County, Pennsylvania. The congregation at Masontown requested Bishop Jacob N. Brubacher of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, to ordain a bishop to have charge of their congregation. In compliance with the request, Bishop Brubacher, accompanied by Bishop Nathaniel Shope of Dauphin County, took the counsel of the Masontown congregation on Nov. 25, 1873. In this counsel Bishop Brubacher asked the congregation to what conference they belonged. They answered they do not belong to any conference. He then asked the ministers what conference they attended. They answered that they attended some sessions of the Lancaster Conference and some sessions of the Ohio Conference.

Bishop Brubacher then stated that he could not ordain a bishop unless they agreed to keep house in accordance with the rules and discipline of the Lancaster Conference until they become connected with some conference. The Masontown congregation agreed to this.

There were three ministers in the Masontown congregation: namely David Johnson, Christian Deffenbaugh, and John N. Durr. The votes of the congregation were taken and David Johnson and John N. Durr received votes for the office of bishop. On the following day, Nov. 26, [1873], the lot was cast between these two brethren and the lot fell on John N. Durr. Brother Durr was then ordained by Bishop Brubacher, assisted by Bishop Nathaniel Shope, and Bishop John D. Overholt of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Bishop George Brenneman of Putnam County, Ohio, was also present. After the ordination Bishop Brubacher gave the congregation a cordial invitation to join in with the Lancaster Conference.

After consultation with the ministry, Bishop Durr and Brother Nicholas Johnson (a member of the same congregation) attended the Lancaster Conference on the first and second days of October the following year, 1874. At this conference Brother Durr presented to Bishops Benjamin Herr, Jacob N. Brubacher, and George Weaver the matter of organizing a conference in the southwestern part of Pennsylvania comprising the various coun-

ties in which there were Mennonite congregations. These bishops expressed themselves favorable to having the conference organized and suggested that a meeting of the ministry of the district be called to further consider the matter.

During the last week of December, 1874, Bishop John N. Durr visited Bishop John D. Overholt, of Westmoreland County, and Samuel Blauch of Cambria County and others of Cambria and Somerset counties and consulted them concerning taking steps to organize a conference.

On Friday, May 21, 1875, the bishops, ministers, and deacons of Greene, Fayette, Westmoreland, Cambria, and Somerset counties of Pennsylvania met in the Stonerville meetinghouse in Westmoreland County (now Alverton, Pa.) in a preliminary meeting and considered the matter of organizing the various congregations into a conference.

It was decided by unanimous voice that another preliminary meeting be held on the third Friday of September the same year in the Casselman Valley in Somerset County.

The meeting was held accordingly on Friday, Sept. 17, 1875, in the Keim meetinghouse (now St. Paul, Pa.). The various congregations were well represented by the bishops, ministers, and deacons. A number of questions were considered, the principal one being the question of organizing a conference, and obtaining proper authority to proceed.

It was decided to send the Brethren Henry H. Blauch and John N. Durr to the Lancaster Conference to present the matter before them.

These brethren presented the matter to the Lancaster Conference which met on October 1 in the Mellinger meetinghouse. The Lancaster Conference offered no objections to the organization of the new conference but deferred final decision until the spring conference.

In the conference which met on April 7, 1876, in the Rohrerstown meetinghouse they decided to grant permission to organize the conference subject to the Lancaster County Conference. On Friday,

Sept. 22, 1876, the bishops, ministers, and deacons of the various counties of Southwestern Pennsylvania met in the Blough meetinghouse near Davidsville, Somerset Co., Pennsylvania. At the request of the bishops of the district, the two Bishops Benjamin Herr and Jacob N. Brubacher had the meeting in charge. Bishop Herr being the moderator of the Lancaster Conference acted as moderator of this meeting. The Bishops Joseph Bixler, of Columbiana, Ohio, and Henry Yother of Nebraska were also present. Bishop Herr presented the doctrines of the Lancaster Conference. After this the testimony of all the bishops, ministers, and deacons were given. This was followed by an address by Bishop Brubacher in which he admonished the members to faithfulness to the doctrines of the church, pointing out the need of entire separation from the world, the need of conformity to the Bible in dress, and faithfully maintaining the ordinance of the prayer-head covering.

Bishop John N. Durr was appointed moderator of the new conference and thus the conference of the Southwestern District of Pennsylvania was declared organized. It was decided to hold the next conference on Sept. 21, 1877, at Masontown. During the summer of 1877 the ministers of the Martinsburg congregation in Blair County requested the privilege of being united with this conference. The matter was considered at the Masontown Conference and the request granted. It was decided to hold the next conference at Martinsburg on Sept. 20, 1878.

At the conference in Martinsburg, a minister, Brother Holder of Centre County requested this conference to recognize his small congregation in the conference. The request was granted and the congregation in Centre County was recognized as belonging to this conference until the death of Brother Holder.

In 1887 the Lancaster Conference requested this conference to include the congregation in Clearfield County. This request was granted and the Rockton congregation has been a part of this conference ever since.

## History of the Rocky Ridge Mennonite Community

BY IVAN MOYER

In the winter of 1931, Llewellyn Groff and Linford Hackman drove from the Old Bethlehem Pike into a narrow, winding, rocky road that went back toward a quarry. To get an idea of just how the work was started, I quote Linford Hackman as he describes their first trip to the Rocky Ridge area.

"After pausing a few minutes to thank God for the joy that was ours as Chris-

tians and asking Him to give us strength to share it with others, and to protect us from the dogs which usually are the first to greet a stranger as he approaches a house, I went to the first house and knocked on the door.<sup>1</sup>

"I would ask whether they had a Bible. If not, I would give them one if they were very much interested. If only somewhat, I would give a Testament; if only



a little, a Gospel. Also, I gave Sunday-school picture cards to the children. The next place Llewellyn [Groff] would go in, the next one I would go in. If it was a place of special interest, the one on the car praying would also be called in to visit and possibly we would have a little season of worship in the home."

An idea of the different nationalities in the community can be gotten by observing a list, kept by Linford Hackman, of Testaments given out. They included German, Polish, Hungarian, Bohemian, Italian, Slovak and Swedish.

After distributing Gospels, Bibles, Testaments, and *The Way* for a number of Saturdays, a cottage meeting was held on March 19 in the home of Clara and Will Anderson. The night of the cottage meeting it rained hard and the group that had gathered wondered if those strangers would come. God had so timed it that they arrived just at 7:30! This gave the people confidence in the workers.

The field worker of the Mission Board, Jacob Moyer, told the workers if they could find a suitable building, the Mission Board would open a mission Sunday school.

On Saturday, April 4, Reuben Diller and Linford Hackman left Souderton to look for a place suitable for Sunday school. After they had stopped for prayer, they went on to the home of Joseph Donise, an Italian Catholic. They asked them if they knew of any suitable building for Sunday school. To their surprise, they said, "right here," pointing to their log cabin which they used for storage and as a summer kitchen.

Saturday, April 11, Reuben Diller, Linford Hackman, and Abram Landis took up thirty-six chairs which had been loaned from the Rockhill congregation, song-books, quarterlies, etc. They put up a few mottoes, arranged the chairs and got the cabin ready for Sunday school.

On Sunday morning, April 12, twenty-six people gathered from the community for the first Sunday school at Rock Hill, as it was then called. It was changed later to Rocky Ridge because of the Rockhill congregation at Telford.

The Sunday school was organized with Linford Hackman, superintendent; Reuben Diller, assistant superintendent; Abram K. Landis, secretary-treasurer, and Clayton Godshall and Warren Gehman, song leaders.

On May 17, the Sunday school at Finland was organized with Clayton Godshall as superintendent. Irvin Sell then came to Rocky Ridge to fill the vacancy. This has been repeated many times with workers going to other mission stations nearby or in other states, but someone has always come to fill the vacancy.

On Monday morning, November 23, the Sunday school burned to the ground. Very little equipment was saved. Sunday school was then held in the Donise home until Mr. Donise could erect another building. The new building was a two-story house

with the partitions left out of the first floor. Mr. Donise, a Catholic, was always very co-operative and helpful.

The first members of Rocky Ridge were Mrs. Kline and Clara and Will Anderson. They were baptized in 1933 by Jonas Mininger. From 1933 to 1939 fourteen members were taken into the church. Unfortunately, eight of the fourteen later left the church.

#### *Growth of the Mission*

As time went on, the mission continued to grow. Linford Hackman resigned as superintendent and answered the call to the mission field in Roseau, Minnesota. Abram Landis was appointed as superintendent. Abram served as superintendent 1938-41, when Reuben Diller, who had been assistant, was appointed superintendent and Warren Gehman was appointed assistant.

After some time, it was decided by the bishop and the Mission Board that the mission should have a pastor. On June 7, 1942, a warm Sunday afternoon, Abram Landis was ordained to the ministry by the local bishops.<sup>2</sup> Two years later, on Nov. 12, 1944, Paul Hendricks was chosen by lot to be the deacon at Rocky Ridge.

The attendance increased, and by 1948 the average was about 134. The building, a two-story house which the mission had been occupying since the log cabin burned, was becoming too small. It was decided that several of the brethren should look for a building site.

On Saturday, Dec. 28, 1946, the brethren went out to investigate. They all agreed to the location on the James Lark property about two miles south of Quakertown on Cressman Road. Rocky Ridge had had a building fund since 1943, but because of the war and other reasons, they had been unable to build. The ground was purchased from James Lark, who, with his family, have been engaged in mission work in Chicago since February, 1945. Ground was broken on April 19, 1948. Many of the neighboring Mennonite churches took offerings to help pay for the building.<sup>3</sup>

By Jan. 1, 1949, the church was finished except for some minor work, with a seating capacity of 307. On January 2, dedication services were held with Linford Hackman preaching the dedication sermon in the afternoon.<sup>4</sup> In April of the same year Rocky Ridge Mission was organized into a church with Warren Gehman, Willard Godshall, and Ernest Moyer the first trustees. It was decided to have an assistant pastor at Rocky Ridge, and on May 25, 1947, Lester Eshleman, who was a medical student at Philadelphia, was ordained to the ministry. The Lancaster Mission Board asked him if he and his wife would consider going to the African mission field. A few years later in 1951, Lester, with his wife Lois, sailed from New York for the mission field in Africa. An assistant pastor was needed

due to Lester's leaving for one year of preparation before going to Africa. On Sept. 24, 1950, Ernest Moyer was ordained by lot to the ministry.

Abram Landis, the senior pastor, had been helping with the work in Vermont for a number of years. When the work continued to grow and a minister was needed for the work at Bridgewater Corners, Vermont, Abram Landis and his family, after being asked by the Mission Board, moved to Vermont. Ernest Moyer, who was assistant pastor, became pastor of the work at Rocky Ridge.

#### *The History of Paletown*

The Rocky Ridge or Paletown area is not a new development. It is rich in historic data. Much of it at one time was owned and occupied by "New" Mennonites. Here is part of a letter written by a former resident who lived in the community for many years:

"In the eighteen hundred and thirties the log house (where Sunday school was first held) and the barn across the road were the farm buildings owned and occupied by John Fellman, my grandfather. His wife, Elizabeth, a born Benner, died in 1837 and was buried in the Mennonite cemetery near Telford. Later he married Anna Diehl, who was my grandmother. I do not know just when, but around that time he moved up on the farm where I lived since I was three months old. My father was born and died in this house.

"My great-grandfather owned the farm where Titus Moyer moved on April 9. It then had more acres of ground. It extended out to the Rosenberger farm where Paul E. Rush moved two years ago (in 1943) and across the road, which my grandfather bought to his farm. Later a man named Elias Sleight owned it and sold an acre of ground next to Titus Moyer where a house was built. This is the oldest house in our village. The other brick houses were all built within two years' time, the Paul Rush dwelling and ours the same year. I believe 1856. The Titus Moyer buildings are not quite that old. The barn burned down by lightning when I was small and I suppose it was built up at once, which would be between 66 and 69 years ago. (about 1880) I do not remember if the house was built before or after the barn. The little house back from the road was a creamery, built in 1892.

"The place where the Rocky Ridge Mission services are now held (since moved to Cressman Road) and the farm now occupied by Titus Moyer were at one time owned and occupied by my grandfather and great-grandfather, all Fellmans and Mennonites.

"There lived years ago many Mennonites in this vicinity; many of them are buried at the Flatland cemetery. I remember the names; Diehl, Souder, Rosenberger, Fellman, Martin, Benner, Schmidt, Biehn, Deaterly, Shive, Frick, Shelly, Landis, Moyer, and Baringer."<sup>5</sup>



Paletown received its name from the fact that around Civil War times the pale fences along the road were all of a similar design and white, which made quite a striking appearance.

As early as 1876 the tannery of Aaron Sorver was in existence. Also, at one time there was a creamery in the community. It was later made into a house. Today, all that is left to remind us of those long-ago years is the old-time blacksmith shop. The smith is Harry T. Kooker, a Paletown resident of long standing, known far and wide for his accomplishments in metal work.<sup>6</sup>

### *A Mennonite Community*

Interest in a Mennonite community was first shown in 1944 when Marcus Clemens and Ernest Moyer started to look for a mission community to establish private business. Three mission communities were investigated, namely, Haycock Mission, Quakertown, R.D.; Rocky Ridge Mission, Quakertown, R.D.; and Finland Mission, Pennsburg, R.D. These communities are all located close to a mountain range which extends for many miles.

J. Winfield Fretz was interested in Mennonite community development, and he was contacted through Marcus Clemens. In March of 1945, Marcus Clemens, J. Winfield Fretz, and Ernest Moyer went to look over the area of Rocky Ridge, particularly the little village of Paletown, located about two miles south of Quakertown. The village of Paletown was decided upon as a suitable place to locate. Ernest Moyer and Marcus Clemens discussed ideas and plans to be worked out before an enterprise of this kind could be begun.

Although some of the areas nearby are covered with large rocks, and the whole mountain is solid rock about the Rock Hill stone quarry, this is a farming area and of higher elevation than the surrounding territory. At this time the Rocky Ridge Mission was located about a mile away, but when Rocky Ridge built a new church it was built near the village of Paletown.

In order to create an interest in a Mennonite community, two meetings were held at the mission. At the first meeting such questions were discussed as, "In what way do I think it will help the work and the workers by moving into the community?" and "How can we help the young people of the community?" At the second meeting a member from the community spoke on, "Would I like to see the workers or Christian families move into the community? If so, why?" There were also other topics and a period of open discussion. These meetings proved successful.

The first family to move into the community was the Titus Moyer family on April 9, 1945. Titus continued his former occupation, that of retailing farm produce on the outskirts of Philadelphia. Since he was the first to live here folks watched him closely. Through the many favors

he did with his tractor and many other helpful things he did for the community, he was accepted by the people and thus the church was made more a part of the community. Titus sold land from his farm to Ernest Moyer, who later erected a hatchery on it, and to Lester Moyer, a worker at Salem, a mission about three miles north of Quakertown.

The second family to come was the Willard Godshall family in the fall of 1945. He purchased the 30-acre Fellman farm. After being in the community for about a year, the barn caught fire from a spark from burning brush and was completely destroyed. Later he sold some of his land as building lots; Marcus Clemens bought some of the land on which the Ridge Hosiery was built (now Van Raalte Hosiery Co.). Leon Horst also bought a building lot which he later sold to the Hosiery. He later moved to a farm near Quakertown.

The community came to a standstill for some time and no industries were established. Marcus Clemens and Ernest Moyer were called away and served in a CPS camp. After Marcus Clemens was released he, with a few others, began working on plans to start a factory for the manufacture of ladies' hosiery. Early in 1947 a new building was erected, and in May it began operating. Since then they have added to the building and increased production several times.

In the fall of 1946 Ernest Moyer was released from camp. He immediately started building a chick hatchery. Operations began by early 1947. The first building, 30 x 40 feet, has been enlarged several times. The hatchery provides employment for workers from several missions as well as people from the local community.

Another family that moved into the community after CPS was the Norman Miningers. For a few years they lived on the James Lark farm, but later Norman bought the house next to the church.

One development which started a little later was a Mennonite day school. It was started in September, 1951, in the

basement of the Rocky Ridge Church. The children came from about six different churches or missions in the surrounding territory. The next year a building was erected. The school is set up to take care of the eight grades. This addition to the community was welcomed by the workers at the nearby Mennonite churches. The local people expressed their appreciation in seeing this development.

As we look over its history it is sad to note that this community (the Rocky Ridge area), which about 100 or 150 years ago was occupied by many Mennonites (New Mennonites), by 1931 had relatively few residents who knew very much about God or the Bible. I hope we will not move out in the years to come, but maintain a Christian witness here. I hope, too, that Christian workers might continue to spread the Gospel by visiting, giving out *The Way*, and by living a Christian life, so that those living near us will have the opportunity to know of Jesus Christ.

The attendance of the church has not always been on the increase. Attendance in the past has gone up for a number of years and then it dropped. This has been repeated a number of times. In the crowded two-story house where Sunday school was held previously, attendance was as high as it is now in the new building. Have we lost some of the family feeling which we had in the smaller quarters or does attendance follow a certain cycle?

### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>Linford Hackman in article "Brief History of Rocky Ridge Mission" in September, 1942, issue of *Mission News* and Linford Hackman in a paper written to the writer, December, 1955.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Hendricks in article "Echoes of Rocky Ridge" in the *Mission News*.

<sup>3</sup>Ernest Moyer in a report on the investigation of a building site.

<sup>4</sup>Oswin Detwiler, "Rocky Ridge Dedication" in January, 1949, issue of *Mission News*.

<sup>5</sup>Flora Fellman in a letter to J. Winfield Fretz, April 26, 1945. The notes in parentheses are the author's.

<sup>6</sup>Walter S. Hare in column "Paletown Area Rich in Historic Data" in *Quakertown Free Press*.

## New District Historians

Several changes have been effected in the appointment of district conference historians since the list was published in the July, 1956, issue. These changes are as follows:

The Alberta-Saskatchewan Conference has appointed Albert Guengerich, Mirror Lake, P.O. Smith, Alberta, as historian to succeed the late Ezra Stauffer who served in that capacity for many years.

The Illinois Conference has appointed Arthur Nafziger as historian for that conference. His address is Hopedale, Illinois.

The Iowa-Nebraska Conference has appointed John W. Gingerich of Kalona,

Iowa, as chairman of their historical committee.

The passing of J. C. Fretz leaves that office vacant in the Ontario Conference.

At the annual meeting of the Historical Committee, at Goshen, Indiana, on April 6, 1957, Ira D. Landis reported the appointment of a historical committee in the Washington-Franklin Mennonite Conference. Roy M. Showalter of Maugansville is chairman, and the two other members of the committee are Nelson Baer and Clarence Shank.

A complete report of the annual meeting of the Historical Committee will appear in the July issue.



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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## A History of Metzlers Mennonite Congregation

By ROBERT B. WENGER

This article is an attempt to briefly relate the history of Metzlers Mennonite Church from its beginning in 1827 to the present date. Metzlers is located in West Earl Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. It is situated close to the road leading from Akron to Farmersville, approximately halfway between these two points. Originally Metzlers was a part of the Weaverland-Groffdale District of Lancaster Conference, but when the District was divided in 1939 it became a part of the Groffdale section. The membership at present consists of slightly more than two hundred persons.

### The Founding of the Congregation

To understand the earliest history of the congregation one has to note the ancestry and biographies of those who were instrumental in founding it. Valentine Metzler, the European ancestor of the Mennonite Metzlers, was born February 24, 1726 in Switzerland, and died July 24, 1783, in Pennsylvania. His parental home was a Christian one which had undergone much persecution. He came to America in 1738, at the age of twelve years, with his father Yost Metzler. The father apparently died soon afterwards, leaving the son an orphan. They arrived at Philadelphia with a group of 348 Palatine Mennonites and settled in Hans Herr's haven in "Penn's Woods."

Valentine married Anna Nisli (Nissley), third and youngest daughter of Jacob Nissley, from near Lancaster City, on December 19, 1749. They began life together in the Landis Valley District, the area due east of Lancaster City. Valentine was a staunch and pious Mennonite and was chosen minister and bishop. He served the church faithfully, reared a large family, which married in the Mennonite Church, before he died July 24, 1783.<sup>1</sup>

Their son Jacob, 1755-1814, married Maria Hess of the Hess congregation. They settled in West Earl Township in 1786 on a seventy-acre farm. They buried a small daughter in a plot on their farm which eventually became the burial ground of Metzlers congregation. Their son, Jacob II, sold the plot to the trus-

tees of the congregation on May 26, 1827, for burial ground and church purposes. The church built on this plot has since become known as Metzlers Mennonite Meeting House.<sup>2</sup>

### The History of the Church Buildings

The trustees to whom Jacob Metzler II sold the plot of land were Jacob Nolt, Christian Meyer, Jr., and Henry Stoner. The deed of conveyance is a very interesting one. In addition to containing a description of the sixty perches of land, the long recital gives directions as to the manner of proceeding for the election of trustees:

"In trust to and for the only proper use purpose and intent of a burial ground and Menonist Meeting House to be erected and built on the hereby

granted lot of ground, and further in trust to and for the only proper use and intent that the society of Menonists or the regular members of the said society who shall attend public worship at or in the said meeting house shall have a right to assemble annually in the said meeting house on the first Monday in May of each and every year hereafter for the purpose of electing by ballot, three trustees for the ensuing year, and until other trustees shall be elected, public verbal notice of such election shall be given to the members of the said society at the two meetings held in said meeting house next preceding such day on which the election is to be held. Such notice is to be given by the preacher or either of the elders of the said society assembling for public worship at said meeting house."<sup>3</sup>

No person, except he be a member of the "society of Mennonites," could serve as a trustee. NonMennonites could be buried in the graveyard,



METZLERS MEETINGHOUSE



but no nonMennonite could preach in the church except on the occasion of a funeral. The trustees named as grantees in the deed were also appointed as managers to erect and build the meetinghouse.<sup>4</sup>

The date when the construction of the meetinghouse began cannot be accurately determined. If it was not begun in 1827 it must have been shortly afterwards, because it was completed by May 8, 1830. The first church building was of frame and log construction and its dimensions were 28 by 30 feet. It was almost square, thus following the European style of architecture for Mennonite meetinghouses. Its cost was \$420.24. The money was obtained by donation from members of the "Mennonite Society." In amount the donations ranged from \$2 to \$40, with fifty-five people making contributions. The most common names among the donors were: Nolt, Wenger, Metzler, Meyer, Stoner, Rupp, Groff, Burkholder, Hurst, Weaver, and Wolf.<sup>5</sup>

This was the first Mennonite meetinghouse in the immediate community. Prior to this time the Mennonites in this area worshipped in homes or at the Groffdale meetinghouse, located six miles to the southeast. Metzlers was in a circuit with Groffdale and the Pike meetinghouse, located a short distance east of Hinkletown on the Harrisburg Road. The latter meetinghouse is six miles northeast of Metzlers and is now occupied by the Stauffer and Weaver Mennonites. Services were held at each place every three weeks. This circuit continued until 1847 when the Stauffer Mennonites withdrew from the main group and occupied the Pike meetinghouse.

The schism came about when a difference of opinion arose in the Groffdale congregation as to the extent and nature of confession required and the discipline to be meted out to a brother and sister accused of harsh and cruel treatment of an orphan girl adopted into their family. Sides were taken throughout the brotherhood which seriously divided the ministerial group and even the bishops of the district. In February, 1846, an edict or plan of reconciliation was issued by the board of bishops. This was signed by all the bishops except Jacob Brubaker of the Juniata district.

The two leaders of the group who did not agree with the bishops were Jacob Stauffer and Jacob Weber, ministers of the Groffdale "bench." They presented a carefully written answer to the bishops at a meeting which was called to reconcile the differences. The dissident group decided to withdraw and named Jacob Brubaker as their bishop. With-

out any dispute the mother church allowed them to have the Pike meetinghouse. After this event Metzlers and Groffdale operated on a circuit on which services were held alternately at the two places. This practice lasted until approximately fifteen years ago when services began every Sunday at both places.

The original church building served the purposes of the congregation until 1864. At this time a fifteen-foot addition was made to the church building. Also eighty-five perches of land were bought and added to the original plot. The trustees at this time were Daniel Meyer, Jacob S. Metzler, and Isaac Burkholder. The cost of the land and building was \$526.23. Donations received amounted to \$636.78.<sup>5</sup>

A special clause in the recital of the deed which conveyed the eighty-five perches of land to the trustees stated that the land should return to the grantors in case it should be abandoned by the "Mennonite Society":

"And further subject to and reserving that if at any time the said premises shall not be used or occupied by the said Mennonite Society as and for their uses and purposes, as herein declared and set forth with intention of perpetual abandonment of the same, in that case, the hereby granted premises shall descend to and reverse back to the said Jacob Metzler his heirs and assigns of the adjoining premise."<sup>7</sup>

In the last decade of the nineteenth century it was decided that the frame and log church building, which had served the congregation seventy years, was no longer suitable. The original building was razed and a new one constructed of brick, sixty-two feet in length, was erected in its place. The cost of this building, together with thirty-one perches of land purchased from Barbara L. Metzler, amounted to \$2,621.83. The cost again was met by donations from the members. The building committee was composed of Jacob Stoner, president; John Metzler, treasurer; and Noah Mack, secretary. The trustees at the time were Abraham Stoner, John Sauder, and Samuel Metzler.

This building had a basement which provided for the meeting of Sunday school classes. The first Sunday school at Metzlers was held in April 1897. Along with the new building the congregation also acquired new hymnbooks, *Hymns and Tunes*. These were used for about twelve years when the *Church Hymnal* was substituted. These are still used at present.

The 1897 building (except for the basement) remained in its original form until 1952, when it was remodeled and a twenty-two foot an-

nex made to the west. This, together with further excavation under the main building, provided additional Sunday school room and seating space at the time of large meetings. A new heating system and lavatories were installed. The old portion was veneered with a layer of new bricks. The cost of the remodeling program was \$26,375.27, and again the outlay was met by donations from the members. The members of the building committee were Robert Benner, president; Christian High, treasurer; Elmer Metzler, secretary; Roy Zimmerman, and Elam Witmer. The present church building is an attractive brick building, surrounded by a number of large shade trees. Its architecture is simple and functionally well adapted for its purposes.

### The Leaders of the Congregation

*Bishops.* The first bishop of Metzlers was Jacob Zimmerman. He was the third resident bishop of the Weaverland-Groffdale District. He was ordained in 1815 as an assistant to Henry Martin and upon the death of the latter served until 1856. Zimmerman's successor was George Weaver, a fifth generation descendant of Henry Weber, the first settler in the Weaverland area. He was chosen bishop in 1854 and was known as a tactful and forceful leader in the congregations. During his twenty-nine years of service the membership increased greatly in numbers.

Jonas H. Martin became the third bishop in the district in 1881. It is imperative to take a brief look at the schism which developed during his years of service. At the time in 1871 when the Lancaster Conference passed a resolution in favor of Sunday schools George Weaver was the leader of the opposition to the movement. However, many farsighted men in the Weaverland-Groffdale District foresaw the necessity of English preaching and longed for the opportunity to teach young people special Bible lessons in that language. The sentiments in favor of Sunday schools and the English language grew and were accepted by a large majority of the members. The ministerial board, however, changed more slowly.

In 1893, at the fall conference Jonas Martin announced that he with many of his members were not in union with certain articles and practices of the conference. Among these was the article allowing Sunday schools to be held. The board of bishops plead with him and his group to accept the articles for the sake of harmony and the good of the church. However, he would not be moved, so that the board finally



deposed him of his bishop responsibilities and withdrew his charge as a minister of the Mennonite Church. Bishop Martin and his supporters met and adopted a series of rulings and regulations designed to provide stricter discipline and more conservativeness. They gathered into the new organization about one-third of the members of the Weaverland-Groffdale District, which has since become known as "The Weaverland Conference." A number of members from Metzlers joined this new body. This group is still active, but their membership has declined and many of their number have returned to the mother church.

Between the years of 1893 and 1902 no resident bishop served the Weaverland-Groffdale District. In 1902 Benjamin Weaver, nephew of former bishop George Weaver, was ordained as bishop. He was in charge of the congregations during the time of World War I which brought on many perplexing problems. He presided over his flock diligently and labored tirelessly until his death in 1928.

Benjamin Weaver had a very capable and outstanding leader for his assistant. He was Noah H. Mack. Mack was ordained to the ministry at Groffdale in 1900, and in 1919 he became bishop-assistant to Brother Weaver. He held this office until 1926, when he accepted a call from the Adams-York County District to serve as bishop. However, he retained his residence in New Holland and kept an active interest in his earlier field of labor, continuing to fill preaching engagements there. Even before his ordination to the ministry, Brother Mack contributed much as a lay member to Metzlers. He was a leading figure in the building program of 1897; he was actively interested in the Sunday school movement and had much to do with the organization of the first school in April 1897. Bro. Mack passed on to his reward October 30, 1948 at the ripe old age of eighty-seven years.

Noah Mack was succeeded at the time he took up the charge in Adams-York County District by John M. Sauder. Brother Sauder was ordained bishop in 1928 and served until his death in 1939. Shortly before his death, Bro. Sauder made plans to divide his district into two separate sections. This was not carried through in his time but when he died two bishops were ordained. Mahlon Witmer was ordained for the Groffdale district and J. Paul Graybill for the Weaverland District. This marked the division of the Weaverland-Groffdale District. Bro. Witmer is presently the bishop of the Groffdale District and resides at New Holland. He serves the

seven congregations in the district: Groffdale, Metzlers, New Holland, Carpenters, Hinkletown, Fraser, and Palo Alto.

**Ministers.** The first minister to take charge of the religious life of the Mennonites at Metzlers was William Westhafer. He lived near Fairmount in West Earl Township and had been ordained at Groffdale soon after 1810. He preached in private homes in the Metzlers community long before the first meeting-house was built. He served until 1826 when he moved to Cumberland County.

Probably the first minister to preach in the Metzlers meetinghouse was Jacob Weber, who was ordained for the district soon after Westhafer left. Weber served at Metzlers and the Pike until 1846 when he cast his lot with the Stauffer branch of the church. Jacob Stauffer, ordained in 1840, also joined the Stauffer group after laboring at Metzlers six years.

Abraham Martin, who was ordained in October, 1847, to fill the vacancies left by Weber and Stauffer, served until 1889 when he died at the age of ninety-one years. At that time he was the oldest minister in the Mennonite church in the County. Martin's assistant and successor was Joseph Wenger; he was killed in 1907 when struck by a train. He was the senior member of the ministerial board of the District and travelled extensively in the interest of the church. During Wenger's period Elias Nolt served as minister from 1868 to 1900. Nolt held progressive views and was an ardent supporter of the Sunday school movement.

On December 26, 1895, Isaiah Witmer was chosen to assist Wenger and Nolt who were both well along in years. Witmer was able, after he became senior minister, to retire from other duties and devote his entire time to the work of the church. He died in 1937.

Benjamin G. Wenger, grandfather of the writer, was ordained in 1908 and served the Ephrata congregation along with Metzlers and Groffdale. Devoting much time to evangelistic work and special meetings throughout the County, he was highly respected by fellow ministers and the laity. He died in 1942. Banks Winey must also be mentioned. He moved into the community as an ordained man in 1910 and labored among his brethren until his death in 1918.

The living ministers who have been called to serve the Metzlers and Groffdale congregations are: Eli G. Sauder, Amos H. Sauder, Lester Hoover, John Martin, and Paul S. Wenger. Eli Sauder was ordained in 1920 and has served at both con-

gregations for thirty-seven years. In 1940 Amos H. Sauder, Jr. was ordained to serve both congregations. Lester Hoover was ordained at Groffdale in 1944 but more recently has taken the pastoral responsibility at the Palo Alto mission church. In 1949 two ministers were ordained: John Martin at Groffdale and Paul Wenger at Metzlers. Although they are primarily responsible for the respective congregations at Groffdale and Metzlers, they occasionally preach in each other's pulpit. Brother Wenger, uncle of the writer, was the first minister to be ordained at Metzlers. All the previous ministers were ordained at Groffdale.

**Deacons.** Through the years a number of deacons have served the Metzlers congregation. They have been: Abraham Burkholder, Benjamin Wenger, Abraham B. Kendig, John H. Martin, Michael W. Nolt, Samuel Metzler, Amos B. Sauder, and Paul H. Weaver. In 1905, beginning with Samuel Metzler, deacons were chosen at Metzlers, rather than at Groffdale as had been the case heretofore. Paul H. Weaver, ordained in 1944, is the present deacon.

#### Outreach of the Congregation

An instance of interest in relief work on the part of Metzlers is on record for the years 1874-75. At this time many Russian Mennonites were leaving Russia and coming to North America. Most of them were poverty stricken and in physical need in general. The members of the congregation at this time took the opportunity to help their Mennonite brethren. Two collections taken, one in 1874 and another one in 1875, raised a total of \$457.00, of which \$132.58 was later paid back.

Through the years many of the members at Metzlers have engaged in mission outreach. Mr. and Mrs. John W. Hess served at several mission points in the Midwest. Amanda Musselman, from the Groffdale congregation but who also attended Metzlers, spent twenty-five years at city missions in Chicago and Philadelphia. Mr. and Mrs. Levi Sauder gave a term of service at the Welsh Mountain Industrial Mission and Millersville Children's Home. Mr. and Mrs. John H. Weaver also spent two years at Welsh Mountain Industrial Mission. Mabel Weaver Marner was a worker for a number of years at Reading and Philadelphia. Minnie Eberly Holsopple served in the South. Barbara Eberly has been at the Johnstown mission. More recently Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Horst have spent a term of service in Belgium and one in Tanganyika.

Members from Metzlers have been influential in establishing several local outposts. Benjamin G. Wenger and Samuel Metzler, with other



members, helped to start the Ephrata congregation. Members from Metzlers helped to establish the Carpenters congregation near Brownstown. The Hinkletown congregation is for the most part an outgrowth of Metzlers. Esther Mellinger Bair, who pioneered in Summer Bible School in the Metzlers area was instrumental in opening work at Hinkletown. A Christian Workers' Band, begun in 1948, provided an avenue of service for the young people of the congregation. They have contributed much time and effort to the Palo Alto Mission at Pottsville in Center County, Pennsylvania, in the form of monthly jail services and the distribution of gospel literature. They also participate in street meetings and services at convalescent homes in Philadelphia.

## The 1957 Meeting of the Historical Committee

The annual meeting of the Historical Committee of General Conference was held this year on April 6 at Goshen College. Last year the Committee was the guest of Samuel S. Wenger at Paradise, Pa., and next year, the Lord willing, it will meet at Eastern Mennonite College.

The members present this year were Harold Bauman, H. S. Bender, J. A. Hostetler, Ira D. Landis, N. P. Springer (proxy for Melvin Gingerich), J. C. Wenger, Samuel S. Wenger, and Gideon Yoder. Three were absent: Ernest R. Clemens, Paul Peachey, and Grant Stoltzfus. The Committee's membership of ten is appointed by General Conference. In 1956 two members, Ernest R. Clemens and J. C. Fretz, were co-opted. Due to the decease of Bro. Fretz during the past year the Committee co-opted Irvin B. Horst at its 1957 meeting. The officers of the Committee are: H. S. Bender, Chairman; J. C. Wenger, Secretary; and Ira D. Landis, Treasurer.

Items of business transacted at the 1957 meeting, as taken from the secretary's minutes, are the following:

3. Moved and carried to authorize the secretary to send a letter of condolence to the widow of our late committee member, J. C. Fretz.

4. The Chairman reported that Harvey Snyder and Paul Burkholder are working on the disposition of the S. F. Coffman papers, the task on which J. C. Fretz was laboring when he passed away. Our Chairman has counseled with the brethren Snyder and Burkholder in their task.

9. The Chairman reported on the proposal of Walter Eisenbeiss, a Lutheran who became a Mennonite through MCC influence, that he translate some Anabaptist documents from German into English.

13. Moved and carried to extend

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Book M-M, pp. 77-80, Recorder's Office, Lancaster County Courthouse.

<sup>2</sup> For Valentine Metzler see Ira D. Landis, "Fifty Mennonite Leaders: Valentine Metzler," *Gospel Herald* (Jan. 3, 1935, p. 846).

<sup>3</sup> Book F-5-552, Lancaster County Courthouse.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Statements of donations and expenses in possession of Reuben Horst.

<sup>6</sup> Statements in possession of Reuben Horst.

<sup>7</sup> Book K-9-39, Lancaster County Courthouse.

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Ira D. Landis, "Fifty Mennonite Leaders: Valentine Metzler," *Gospel Herald* (Jan. 3, 1935), p. 846.

Martin G. Weaver, *Mennonites of Lancaster Conference* (Scottsdale, 1931).

Deed recorded in the Lancaster County Courthouse.

MS papers in possession of Reuben Horst.

MS papers in possession of Elmer Metzler.

Interview with Amanda S. Wenger.

caring for the work until Gingerich returns.

23. John A. Hostetler reported on the proposed History of Mennonite Publishing House. Suggestions were made for the enrichment of the volume.

24. John A. Hostetler solicited suggestions for the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the House. H. S. Bender pledged the readiness of the Historical Committee to help in any possible way. Perhaps a traveling exhibit could be taken from one district conference to another. Could our Publishing House issue a pictorial volume on our churches and institutions? A few maps could be included.

25. The Committee re-elected Harold S. Bender to another four-year term on the General Council, 1957-1961.

32. Harold S. Bender exhibited Volume 25 of *The Christian Classics* which is devoted to "the Radical Reformation." The Committee felt that we should still go ahead with our plans for an Anabaptist reader.

35. Ira D. Landis reported the creation of a historical committee in the Washington-Franklin District, with Roy M. Showalter, Maugansville, Md., as chairman.

36. The Committee authorized its officers to arrange for a meeting of district conference historians for mutual stimulation and helpfulness.

37. The Committee went on record as favoring the translation and publication in English of N. van der Zijpp's Dutch history of the Dutch Mennonites.

42. The Committee agreed to the removal of the Archives from the Memorial Library to the proposed new seminary building, and authorized the Chairman and Secretary to abrogate the agreement now in effect as between the Historical Committee and the Board of Education, and to negotiate a new agreement locating the Archives in the Seminary Building, provided no financial obligation to the Historical Committee is incurred thereby. The proposed quarters for the Archives involves a substantial increase in space for the Archives, for which the Historical Committee is deeply grateful.

43. Moved and carried to approve the layout of space in the new Archives arrangement, and to empower the Chairman and Secretary to plan further in this area.

44. It was agreed to ask H. S. Bender, Melvin Gingerich and N. P. Springer to serve as an Equipment Committee to make definite plans for the equipment of the Archives in the Seminary Building.

47. Attention was called to Ira D. Landis' new book, *The Lancaster Mennonite Conference, History and Background*, 1956.

a vote of thanks to Walter E. Oswald, both for his regular services as Archivist and for his donated labor after his resignation.

15. and 16. John A. Hostetler gave his report as editor of *Mennonite Historical Bulletin*. It was agreed in reference to the *Bulletin*:

- To print enough copies to have a surplus stock of about 200 copies of each issue.
- To give five complimentary copies to writers of articles.
- To send no extra copies to associate editors unless requested.
- Moved and passed to invite Irvin B. Horst to serve as editor for the coming biennium, and J. A. Hostetler as assistant editor.

17. Harold S. Bender, editor, reported on *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*. All the manuscripts, pictures, and maps for Volume III have been submitted to Mennonite Publishing House. It is hoped to have Volume III off the press by July 1, 1957.

18. H. S. Bender reported that the publication of the *Täuferakten* volumes has been delayed by a slow delivery of manuscripts by authors. Two small volumes of Hans Denk materials have appeared. Other volumes of Alsatian and Hutterite materials are currently in preparation.

19. It was agreed to ask the Secretary of our Committee to communicate our desire to see our ministers secure *The Mennonite Encyclopedia* to our district conference officers, and to prepare a letter to be made available to our Sunday school librarians for mailing out by Mennonite Publishing House.

21. It was agreed to appoint Melvin Gingerich to manage the Mennonite History Essay Contest for the 1957-59 biennium, with J. C. Wenger



# MENNONITE HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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## The Wandering Soul, A Remarkable Book of Devotion

IRVIN B. HORST

No book of Mennonite authorship has been more frequently reprinted—and presumably read—than *The Wandering Soul*.<sup>1</sup> Although no longer known to English readers, it is still in print in a German edition and cherished in many Amish households. The book has gone through no less than 90 editions in the Dutch, German, and English languages since it first appeared in the year 1635 at the town of Alkmaar in Holland. Who was the author of this remarkable book? What is the nature of its contents? Why did it become so popular? These are the questions one asks today about a book which so often turns up in grandfather's library or among the family heirlooms in the attic.

The author, Jan Philip Schabaelje, 1592-1656, was a Waterlander Mennonite, a figure of some note in his own church circles and in Dutch religious and literary life in general.<sup>2</sup> He came from Zeeland, from the island of Walcheren, where his family were millers. In his youth he did a great deal of versifying, for when the *Walchers Liedboek*, a poetical miscellany, appeared in 1611 it contained over a hundred of his poems. The next year he went to Amsterdam and made his way among the Mennonites there, engaged in the milling business, and continued to write. In 1620 he accepted the responsibilities of a minister (*dienaar*), but four years later moved to Alkmaar and became a fellow-minister of Hans de Ries. This was not successful, and in 1648 Schabaelje returned to Amsterdam where he spent the remainder of his life writing, publishing, and selling books.

Schabaelje's writings were chiefly of a devotional nature. Some of his early verse got into *Het Rijper Lietboekken*, an early Waterlander hymnbook, first published in 1624 by his friend Claes Jacobsz at the village of De Rijp. Other poems, including his better ones from a literary standpoint, appeared in *'t Gheestelijck Kruydt-Hofken* (The Garden of Spiritual Herbs) in 1629, also

published by Jacobsz. Much of his verse had literary merit and in style as well as in subject content anticipated the poetry of Dirk Camphuyzen and Jan Luiken, the most notable of the Dutch devotional writers during the 17th century.<sup>3</sup>

Schabaelje, as well as his publisher friend Jacobsz from De Rijp, was a member of a circle of religious seekers and devotional writers at Amsterdam. The group was likely never organized in a formal way, but its members met frequently and wrote much. Their activities were spiritualistic in emphasis with much concern about the cultivation of the inner life. In many ways they were similar to the later Collegiants, and the Mennonite members, particularly, had much in common with the Lamists who arose later in the century under the leadership of Galenus

(Continued on Page 2)

## Biographical Sketch of Joseph Sohm

JOHN F. FUNK

(Until the discovery of this sketch among the literary records of John F. Funk, next to nothing was known about the translator of the *Martyrs' Mirror*. In the original copy many of the nouns are capitalized, and one of the sentences was cut into two, while two other sentences have been combined in editing the sketch for publication. Material in brackets was supplied by myself. J.C.W.)

Joseph Sohm was born in Germany, probably in the early sixties [1860-65]. He was of Catholic parentage, but after coming to America, he became a Methodist.

When he first came to Elkhart he was employed as compositor in the office of the Mennonite Publishing Company. Later he took a position as proofreader and translator. He translated among other articles and booklets *The Book of Martyrs*, the largest and most highly esteemed book ever published by the Mennonite people. It was printed in this country in 1747-8-9. The oldest editions were printed in the Holland [German] language by the Seclusionists, at Ephrata, Pa. It required three years of hard labor for 15 men to translate and print and bind the work. The old German editions were 11 x 15 inches and contained about 1500 double-column pages. These were printed in large type.

The book from which Mr. Sohm made his translation was a folio edition illustrated with many wood-cut engravings printed in Holland in 17-- [1685?].

Mr. Sohm also [labored] on this book for three years. While thus engaged he made a trip to Germany taking the Holland edition and the other books needful for the work with him, and on shipboard and in Europe when leisure time permitted he continued his work while on his journey. He wrote a small and distinct hand and when the work was completed he had ten thousand manuscript pages, and when these were printed we had a book containing over one thousand, royal octavo double-column paper, which [was] a beautiful volume, illustrated, con-

(Continued on Page 7)

## Vervolgh der Collation vande Wandelende Ziele met Symeon Cleophas.

Verhandelnde  
De Gheschiedenissen des Ouden Testaments  
vanden Abraham af tot op de Verlossing  
des Jeruzalems toe.

Vermecderd  
Met meer Copere Plactgens als opt boez  
desen ghezoucht.



r'Amsterdam,

By Ian Albertsz. Boeck-verkooper op de  
Nieuwen-Dijk / in't A B C.  
Anno 1641.

Title page from the 1641 Dutch edition of *The Wandering Soul*. Translated it reads, *Continuation of the Colloquies of the Wandering Soul with Simon Cleophas, Treating the History of the Old Testament from the Time of Abraham until the Destruction of Jerusalem*. The motto in the emblem is, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow."



## THE WANDERING SOUL

(Continued from Page 1)

Abrahamsz. Other members of the group were Pieter Pietersz and Judith Lubberts, both Mennonites and writers of devotional literature. Lubberts, a poetess of some ability, was betrothed to Schabaelje but this was dissolved in 1629, apparently for religious reasons. At least Lubberts joined the Catholics during the same year, and in so doing preceded another Mennonite of her time and the greatest of all Dutch literary figures, Joost van den Vondel. Robert Friedmann has written an excellent introduction to the writings of Pieter Pietersz and Schabaelje, but it is confusing to consider these writers pietistic rather than spiritualistic.<sup>4</sup>

The immediate background, then, which shaped *The Wandering Soul* was 17th century Dutch spiritualism. In subject matter it was chiefly historical, but in purpose it was a work of devotion. In the preface the author described it as "stichtelijck en nuttelijck" (devotional and useful)—practical edification. This becomes evident too from the devotional tract to which it is appended, *Lusthof des Gemoets, inhoudende verscheyden Geestelijcke Oeffeningen* (A Pleasant Garden of the Mind, Containing Various Spiritual Exercises). This title, Schabaelje informed the reader, may also be given to the second part of the book.

Schabaelje's books in general were works of spiritual and ethical edification. *Historische beschrijving van het leven Jesu Christi* (An Historical Description of the Life of Jesus Christ), first published in 1647 by Jacobsz, encouraged the reader to imitate the life of Christ. *Metamorphosis*, the last of his books and published a year after his death, was a dialogue between an historian and a pilgrim intended to show man's true nature in Christ. Schabaelje was also a promoter of unity among the Dutch Mennonite groups. To this end he drew up a confession of faith, *Vereenigingh van de principale artikeln des geloofs* (A Union of the Principal Articles of Faith), which came out in 1640 and was several times reprinted.

In Dutch *The Wandering Soul* was never published as a separate book. It was always a supplement to the preliminary work, *Lusthof des Gemoets*. (Except for the illustration reproduced here from the 1641 edition the book never had a separate title page. This 1641 title page actually pertains only to the third part of *The Wandering Soul* or the dialogue with Simeon Cleophas.) The two works were separated when the German translation was made in the 18th century, and *Die wandelnde Seele* appeared as a unified and in-

dependent work. It has remained so throughout the many German editions in both Europe and America. Since the English translation was made directly from the German the same has been true of the various English editions. The supplement has outlived and become more important than the first part of the book.

In the early editions the title in Dutch was *Collatien der wandelende Ziele* which later was changed to *Samenspraaken der wandelende Ziele*. The form of the work, as the title suggests, was that of a colloquy or dialogue. Schabaelje refers to Erasmus in the introduction and he was no doubt aware of the popularity of his fellow countryman's colloquies in both the Latin and vernacular languages of Europe. The form was a popular one in the Middle Ages and later and employed for edificatory treatises as well as controversial ones. More specifically, however, "collatie" referred to a religious discourse or sometimes to a short devotional talk or sermon. Schabaelje was also aware of the dual meaning of the term and toyed with the idea of the *Wandering Soul* collating the records of history with actual eyewitness accounts from Adam and Noah.<sup>5</sup> He also knew that much of his work amounted to a paraphrasing of his sources, particularly the Scriptures. This method, he explained, possibly to answer criticism, was used acceptably and with much profit by Erasmus, Karel van Mander, Du Bartas, and others.<sup>6</sup>

To the first edition of *Lusthof des Gemoets* (1635) Schabaelje appended, seemingly as an after thought, two colloquies in which a pilgrim conversed with Adam and Noah. This pilgrim character was named the *Wandering Soul* and represented the spiritual nature of every earnest Christian who longed for counsel from men of faith in the past. The creation of this type of a character appears to have been original with Schabaelje. Beginning with the edition of 1638 a third colloquy was added, that of the *Wandering Soul* with Simeon Cleophas. This dialogue, in comparison with the former two, is a greatly expanded one. In the duodecimo edition in 1641 it runs on for more than 400 pages and covers a period of history from the time of Abraham to the year 109 A.D. Simeon was taken from the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, where he is reported to have been a contemporary of Christ and Paul and to have witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem.

The *Lusthof* with its appended colloquies was a successful work and at least 14 editions appeared in Dutch during the lifetime of the author. In 1656, the year of Scha-

baelje's death, a revised edition appeared which contained two additional colloquies—the *Wandering Soul* with Jacob and Joseph—and a new set of etched illustrations. The earlier editions were illustrated with rather crude but expressive woodcuts. The revision must not have been successful, for all future editions omitted the new dialogues as well as the new illustrations. In 1706, after more than 35 editions had been printed, the book was graced with a new set of etchings by Jan Luiken. This artist, it will be recalled, had created the illustrations for the second edition (1685) of Van Braght's *Martyrs' Mirror*. The combination was ideal: the baroque style of Luiken interpreted well the religious fervor of Schabaelje's characters.

All told more than fifty editions of the work appeared in Dutch until 1768. Sometime in the 18th century the dialogues were translated into German. The translator is not known for certain, but I. Daniel Rupp, the English translator in 1834, believed he was Benedict Brackbill, the well-known Swiss Mennonite leader and pioneer settler in Pennsylvania. Sufficient evidence for this view is lacking but all the German editions contain the initials B.B.B. as those of the translator. The translator had a very high opinion of the dialogues, for in his preface he is bold to accord it a place alongside the Bible itself. The earliest German edition known by the writer of this article is that of 1741, printed by Johann Conrad Mechels at Basel. This edition, however, is the fourth, so that the original work likely appeared in the 1720s if not before.

At least thirteen German editions were printed in Europe. Most of these were from the press of the Von Mechels firm at Basel but some appeared at Frankfurt and Stuttgart. The German edition was brought to America, and in 1768 the first edition on this side of the Atlantic was published by Christopher Saur at Germantown. Eighteen additions in German appeared in this country, most of them in the 19th century, but one, called the 14th edition, was printed in 1919 by the Mennonite Publishing House at Scottdale, Pennsylvania. More recently, in 1952, J. A. Raber of Baltic, Ohio, published a German edition which is still in print.

The popularity of *Die wandelnde Seele* in America assured its translation into English. This was done by I. Daniel Rupp and first published by him in 1834 at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Subsequently five English editions appeared in Pennsylvania and two in Virginia. The English translation has not been a very sat-

(Continued on Page 4)



## News and Notes

**FAMILY HISTORIES.** They often appear unannounced and in a limited number of copies. Two were recently published in Lancaster County. *Descendants of Jacob M. Horst*, by Frances W. Hurst, was published by the author, printed at Ephrata, Pa., and without date. It has 41 pages and is priced at \$1.50. A larger work, at the same price, is *A Family History of the Descendants of Isaac and Catherine (Witwer) Weaver, Including Some of Their Ancestry*, by W. Banks Weaver, without place or date of publication. It has 102 pages, is illustrated, and is partially indexed. Both of these books can be obtained from Weaver Book Stores, Lancaster and New Holland.

**LIST OF PUBLISHED GENEALOGIES.** Speaking of Mennonite family histories, more than usual commendation is due Nelson Springer, curator of the Mennonite Historical Library at Goshen College, for the full list he compiled. It appeared under "Genealogy" in volume two of *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*. Spread over eight pages it must be a definitive bibliography of known published genealogies of Mennonites. It includes American Mennonite families both of Swiss and Russian (Dutch-German) extraction, with a supplement of Dutch and German Mennonite names. It represents much painstaking work and is an invaluable source for anyone interested or working in the general field of Mennonite genealogy. One may express the hope that it will reappear as a separate publication.

**DIRK PHILIPS.** This is a name to watch, for there is some new and promising interest in him, both scholarly and lay. Dirk Philips, or Dietrich Philip, as his name occurs in the German editions of his *Enchiridion*, has been pretty much under the shadow of Menno Simons studies. It appears, however, that he is now becoming a subject for independent study and research. William E. Keeney, instructor in Bible at Bluffton College, has completed a study of Dirk in the form of a Th.M. thesis at Hartford Theological Seminary. According to announcement in a recent issue of *The Budget*, J. A. Raber, an Amish publisher at Baltic, Ohio, will bring out a new edition of Dirk Philips' works. The current issue of *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* contains an article, "The Christology of Dirk Philips," by Cornelius J. Dyck.

The general impression of Dirk has been a not too favorable one. He is seen as an excessively severe disciplinarian with a rather morose personality. It is true that he was a

leading exponent of the ban and shunning, but there was another side to his leadership. He was a deeply spiritual man, as his writings reveal, full of warmth and fervor, from which any Christian, modern or 16th century, may profit. His writings are sizable in amount and high in theological perspicacity. His portrait indicates a serious but genial mien, an appearance which reminds one of Mennonite piety at its best. Incidentally, from the standpoint of scholarship, more progress has been made on the writings of Dirk Philips than on any other Anabaptist or Mennonite figure. A textual edition of all his writings, including letters and hymns, with a full apparatus of notes and bibliography, was published in volume ten of the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica* in the Netherlands in 1914. This has not been done for Menno Simons. Hans Denck, it appears, will be the next figure to be given this consideration. The *Täuferakten-Kommission* has begun the publication of Denck's writings, of which the first two volumes have already appeared.

**SIT-DOWN PREACHERS.** "At this place I also attended a Mennonite preaching service. It was of the Frisian persuasion, and the minister sat and preached. They sang our psalms and also prayed for the magistrate." The mayor of the town of Harderwijk, in the Netherlands, wrote this in his journal at the time of a visit to Amsterdam about 1640. The picture is that of the minister in the role of teacher or admonisher rather than that of a pulpit figure or orator as was the case in the Reformed Church. The mayor, of course, was a member of the state Reformed Church. (*Amstelodamum*, XX (1923), p. 30.)

**ARTICLES IN CONFERENCE PERIODICALS.** Articles of Mennonite historical note often appear in

the missionary periodicals published in the various conferences. For example, "History of the Mennonite Churches in Stark County, Ohio," by O. N. Johns, appeared in *The Ohio Evangel*, XI, 3 (May-June, 1957). *The Gospel Evangel* (Indiana-Michigan), XXXVIII, 2, (March-April, 1957), carried a biographical account of the life work of Ira S. Johns, written by D. A. Yoder.

**READERS' GUIDE.** An occasional index to periodical literature about Mennonites and Amish, possibly an annual bibliography, might help those interested to keep abreast with some valuable materials. *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* does keep one informed to some extent, particularly about articles appearing in the better-known national magazines, but many articles in smaller periodicals go by the board. The article by David L. Souder, "'Walk Ye in the Ways of the Lord . . .,'" which appears in this issue of the *Bulletin*, provides a sympathetic close-up of cultural change among Amish in Howard County, Indiana. The article is of a literary nature and as such depicts the more human aspects of change. It originally appeared in *The University of Virginia Magazine*, I, 4 (Easter, 1957). Because we believe it deserves a Mennonite audience also, as well as to be on record in a Mennonite source, it is reprinted here.

**NEWSPAPER FEATURES.** Some very much worthwhile articles also appear in newspapers. Recently we saw a series of five prepared for the *Wooster Daily Record* by Alma Kaufman, a member of that newspaper's staff. The series, which ran March 16, 20, 27, and April 5 and 20 of this year, is about the history, life, and customs of the Amish in eastern Holmes County, Ohio. It is well written, factual, and illustrated.

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### THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

*This is a description or lifelike portrait of the Christian congregation, how it goes on here in the first place in the Spirit, and hereafter in the perfection of heavenly existence. For in the first place the Holy City is the congregation, whose citizens are the Christian believers and members of the household of God (Eph. 2:19), and it is called a city for the reason that as in a city there must be concord; the citizens must hold firmly together, living and conducting themselves according to the same polity, law, and statutes, if the city is to continue to exist. So it must also be in the congregation: there must be unity of Spirit and of faith (I Cor. 1:9; 10:21; Rom. 12:16); there the same rule of the divine Word must govern the walk of its members, and the divine polity which this city has received of God must be concordantly observed. Therefore also the prophet (Ps. 122:3) declares that Jerusalem is built as a city whose citizens are united, whereby there is portrayed to us the unity of the congregation of God, of which the Scripture says much (Eph. 4:3; Col. 3:5; Gal. 3:28; John 17:11).*

—DIRK PHILIPS, (*Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, p. 255.)



## NEWS AND NOTES

(Continued from Page 3)

FLORIDA MENNONITES. A well-written account of Mennonites in Florida, as seen by John Umble, appeared in *Mennonite Life*, XII, 3 (July, 1957), a periodical of general cultural and religious interest to Mennonites, published at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

MENNONITES AND THE CIVIL WAR. With the Civil War centennial approaching, historians and journalists, particularly, are stirring the past for new subjects. Roger P. Bristol, a scholar with considerable training and experience in the field of American history, located at the University of Virginia, has begun a study of the impact of the War between the States on the Peace Churches. We have books on Mennonites in relation to the two World Wars but no treatment of the effects of the Civil War. Such an account is needed and will be welcomed.

CLASSIC ANABAPTIST WRITINGS. For the first time, one suspects, the writings of representative Anabaptist authors have been included among the classic literature of the Christian Church. Volume twenty-five of *The Library of Christian Classics* is entitled *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*. It is just out and may be had from Westminster Press at Philadelphia at the price of \$5.00. The volume is edited by Prof. George H. Williams of Harvard, with a section on "Evangelical Catholicism" edited by Prof. Angel M. Mergal of the Evangelical Seminary in Puerto Rico. Prof. Williams' approach is a very comprehensive one to what he calls "the Radical Reformation." This he subdivides into three main groupings, "the Anabaptists proper, the Spiritualists, and the Evangelical Rationalists." Mennonites in general hold to a more particularistic definition of Anabaptism and would differ with Williams. However, the book is a very useful one and brings together an important collection of sources in the English language. Mennonites will be particularly interested in the "Confession" of Obbe Philips, which heretofore has not been available in English.

Dirk Philips is very well represented in this volume by 33 pages from one of his best pamphlets, *Van die Ghemeynte Godts*. Menno Simons, on the other hand, is given a place after Dirk Philips with nine pages of text from one of his lesser writings, *Sommige Vragen*, on the ban. This does not do justice to the amount and quality of his writing, not to say anything about his more constructive emphases and spiritual concerns.

## THE WANDERING SOUL

(Continued from Page 2)

isfactory one. It was translated from the German rather than from the original language, and a comparison with the Dutch indicates that much has been lost, not only in style but also in nuances of thought. The title "Wandering Soul" is rather unfortunate. "Pilgrim," as the 1838 edition printed at Pittsburg had it, is much better, but even "pilgrim soul" is not good idiomatic English. An uninspired translation doubtless hastened the end of this devotional book in the English-speaking world.

To what may we attribute the success of *The Wandering Soul*? It was in demand not only among Mennonites in both the Old World and the New but also found a wide circle of readers in other groups. The publishers of the book at Harrisburg, Pittsburg, and Philadelphia were not the ones who catered to Mennonite readers.

Part of the answer pertains to the literary quality of the book. In conception it was original and imaginative. The form, that of the colloquy, was a popular type of the period. The skillful use of conversation breaks the monotony of what would otherwise be an extended historical account. Talk as Schabaelje used it also created character. The persons in the dialogues, especially the *Wandering Soul*, are often sentimental, but they are at least warm and human. As a whole the work is extremely readable and slanted to meet the interest of the common man.

The book also had appeal as an account of sacred history interwoven with events from the secular past. The German translator recommended it highly as a means of instructing youth. As a reliable historical account, however, the book is very weak. Not all of Schabaelje's sources were dependable and it appears that he added some opinions of his own. Nevertheless it was valued as a useful account of biblical history. Since this was the case one can easily understand that when the patrons of the book became better informed it was no longer in demand.

The devotional nature of *The Wandering Soul*, however, was its principal asset, especially for Dutch readers. The particular piety which it reflected, as we have indicated above, was spiritualistic. It was a kind of *vade mecum* of a movement which flowered in the 17th century in the Netherlands. The religious fervor which it generated lasted well into the 18th century. This explains, likely more than any other reason, why the book attained as many as 50 editions in the Low Countries.

To endeavor to revive *The Wandering Soul* for modern readers

would most certainly be futile effort. The dialogue form is out of date, and the simple charm of the conversation would likely elude the translator if it was done in the English language. It has little value as an historical work. Its concern with practical piety, however, and the concept of the Christian life as a pilgrimage are an integral part of the Anabaptist understanding of the Christian life and valid in any age.

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* might come up for consideration as the most widely reprinted book if the question is asked in terms of Anabaptist books, especially if one accepts a comprehensive definition of the term. John Bunyan, it is true, was an English Anabaptist, in the sense that Baptists were popularly so called. He became a member of the group in 1653 and soon after began to preach the Gospel. The metaphor and theme employed in his great book is reminiscent of Anabaptist views. As long as one accepts a particularistic definition of Anabaptism and a comprehensive one of Puritanism John Bunyan will be classified as a Puritan. This is the case at present among both literary and church historians.

<sup>2</sup> For information concerning Schabaelje I am indebted to the article in the Dutch biographical dictionary, *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek*, vol. IX, cols. 953-54, and to the article by H. J. Wijman, "Judith Lubberts, een Amsterdamsche Dichteres uit de 17e Eeuw," *Amstelodamum*, vol. XXXV (1938), pp. 41-79.

<sup>3</sup> Wijman, "Judith Lubberts," pp. 54-57.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Friedmann, *Mennonite Piety through the Centuries, Its Genius and Its Literature* (Goshen, Indiana, 1949), pp. 111-15.

<sup>5</sup> See the "Voor-Reden" in the 1641 edition, fol. A2-v 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. A4-r.

AMERICAN EDITIONS OF  
THE WANDERING SOUL

## I. Editions in the German Language

1. 1768. Die wandlende Seel, das ist: Gespräch der Wandlenden Seelen mit Adam Noah und Simon Cleophas; verfasst die Geschichten von der Erschaffung der Welt an biss zu und nach der Verwüstung Jerusalems. Daraus ordentlich zu ersehen, wie eine Monarchie und Königreich auf die andere folgt, wie diese angefangen jene aber vergangen, und auch ausführliche Verlauff der Zerstörung Jerusalem. Durch Johann Philip Schabalie. Christopher Saur at Germantown, Pennsylvania.
2. 1771. Die wandlende Seel . . . die zweyte Auflage. Christopher Saur at Germantown, Pennsylvania.
3. 1794. Die wandlende Seel . . . die dritte Auflage. Peter Leibert at Germantown, Pennsylvania.
4. 1805. Die wandlende Seel . . . die vierte Auflage. Michael Billmeyer at Germantown, Pennsylvania.
5. 1822. Die wandlende Seele . . . John S. Wiestling at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
6. 1833. Die wandlende Seele . . . G. S. Peters at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
7. 1833. Die wandelnde Seele . . . J. Howe at Philadelphia for G. W. Wentz and Son at Philadelphia.
8. 1834. Die wandelnde Seele . . . J. Howe at Philadelphia for G. W. Mentz and Son at Philadelphia.

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## A Conference Historian Was Elected

LAURENCE M. HORST

(This article is reprinted from *The Missionary Guide*, the missions periodical of the Illinois Conference, the issue of April 1957. It contains a number of excellent ideas which deserve to be shared with other conference and local historians throughout the church. Used by permission. Ed.)

At the fall session of the Illinois Mennonite Conference, 1956, the Christian Education Cabinet presented the name of Arthur W. Nafziger to serve as our first conference historian. Brother Nafziger has been asked by the conference to serve in this capacity and has accepted this position.

In the February issue of *The Missionary Guide*, page seven, is an article entitled, "From the Conference Historian." In this article our historian suggests that, "each congregation have a local historian . . . an individual who by inclination and talent is fitted for the office . . ." Our historian says further—

"We need to record our present activities in furthering the cause of Christ that those that follow us may learn from our experiences. . . . Many of our homes have items of historical value forgotten in attics, closets, or on shelves, such as letters, programs, pictures, books, and scrapbooks . . ."

We are indeed fortunate to have a man in the Illinois Conference who is willing to give the time and effort necessary to carry on an active program of historical significance that will reach into our local churches.

By this time all of our congregations have given thought to the matter of having a historian. When decision is made by the church the name should be submitted to the conference historian Arthur W. Nafziger whose address is Hopedale, Illinois.

### SUGGESTION FOR THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

#### I. Cooperate with the conference historian by:

1. Calling to his attention matters of historical value within the state.
2. Supervising the preparation of materials from the local church at his request.

#### II. Foster in the congregation an appreciation for our heritage.

1. Find and preserve items of historical value.
2. Encourage the production of articles of historical interest for church papers.

3. Keep a file of items of outstanding historic value in the local church.

#### III. Strive to preserve all current historical matters.

1. Programs, bulletins, special meetings, etc.
2. Reports to the congregation by various church officers.
3. Newspaper clippings relative to the local congregation or her members.
4. Encourage the church to keep a careful system of records.
5. Plan a historical scrapbook.

(1) This scrapbook should have logical time-wise progression.

(2) It may contain clippings and pictures from local and church papers.

(3) Each clipping or page of clippings should be carefully dated including the month and the year.

(4) Pictures may be placed in among the clippings as they are available. All pictures should be carefully dated.

(5) Letters and articles from Oldtimers whose information will be lost when they are called away in death.

a. If the person cannot write then the local historian or someone of his choosing could take the story and then put it into writing and turn it over to the church's historical scrapbook or file.

b. Testimonies, outstanding decisions, lessons learned from life, and church-related experiences could be among the matters to get from our older members.

(6) When one scrapbook is completed it may be carefully indexed to make the material in it readily accessible.

(7) It is not impossible to think of a table of contents in such a scrapbook if careful time progression has been kept in mind throughout.

(8) A plate listing the illustrations would also have value.

(9) When such a book is completed it could be dated for the period of

time it represents and placed in safe keeping.

#### IV. Some advantages of a scrapbook.

1. It keeps the materials together and in sequence.
2. It makes tables of contents and indexes possible for quick reference.
3. It makes it possible to keep a lot of materials together in a small space and facilitates the keeping of historic materials.

Note: All materials should be of the best quality of material so that they will not dry out and crack in a few years.

The *fifth ordinance* is the command of love which Christ gave his disciples, saying (John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17): A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to another. From this it is easy to understand that pure brotherly love is a sure sign of genuine faith and true Christianity. But this is true brotherly love, that our chief desire is one another's salvation, by Scriptural instruction, admonition, and rebuke.

—Dirk Philips

### AS OTHERS SEE US . . .

James Hastings Nichols, Professor of Church History, University of Chicago, on the subject of the denomination as a modern church form:

The effect of this synthesis of faith and culture on ecclesiastical institutions must also be observed. Instead of the "church" and "sect" as the classical forms of ecclesiastical institution, modern church history is characterized by the "denomination." Even bodies like the Roman Catholics, who have wished to remain churches, or the Mennonites who have intended to be sects, have been forced to become, for most practical purposes, "denominations."—*History of Christianity 1650-1950, Secularization of the West* (New York, 1956), p. 12.

[The views of out-group writers are often helpful towards a true understanding and evaluation of our Mennonite life in the past and present. From time to time we shall note a few of these without comment on our part and in context as much as possible. The statements will be of an historical nature. Ed.]



## "Walk Ye in the Ways of the Lord . . ."

JEREMIAH 7:23

DAVID L. SOUDER

Over a hundred years ago, a group of Amish broke with the main body of their church and moved westward from Pennsylvania. Most of these dissenters settled in central Ohio, but a few families pushed on into Howard County, Indiana, and established a small colony. They were skillful, hard-working farmers, and as they prospered they spread out over the surrounding area until their tidy farmyards and well-cultivated fields became a trademark of the County. They rigidly adhered to their strict discipline and avoided all "worldly" influences. At a time when technology was revolutionizing agriculture, they continued to farm as their forefathers had long before. Except for the McCormick reaper and the threshing machine, they scorned modern farm machinery, and when electricity, the telephone, automobiles, movies, and television came onto the American scene, the Amish denounced them as "worldly" and continued to use their kerosene lamps and horse-drawn carriages and farm implements.

As long as the younger men remained on the family farm, the Amish could keep pace with their modern neighbors by sheer manpower. But today most of the young people are leaving the old sect, and their parents are losing the fight against progress. Many of the sons and daughters are joining the more progressive Mennonite sect, which allows them to dress in modern fashion, to own cars and tractors, and have electricity and most of the conveniences of twentieth-century living. A few have completely forsaken the "old ways," moving into town and completely adopting the "worldly" way of life. Only fourteen or fifteen families still remain true to the strict Amish discipline. As the tide of modernity gains momentum, even this hard core is eroding away.

One branch of my own family left the sect before the turn of the century, when my great-grandfather became an Evangelical minister, travelling from one town to another preaching in German. He kept the farm, however, and it is now run by my uncle. Since it had been located in the very heart of the Amish colony, it was still surrounded on all sides by Amish holdings when I first began to spend my summers on the farm. Among my earliest memories of those days are the swaying Amish buggies, drawn by handsome Morgans, clattering over the covered bridge a few yards down the road

from us. The children would peep shyly through the tiny oval windows, while their parents gazed stoically ahead, and occasionally a snatch of their conversation, oddly phrased in a Germanic dialect, drifted hollowly back to me. Sometimes they would pass on a late Sunday afternoon, on the way home from their all-day church meeting, while my cousins and I were swimming in the gravel pit next to the road. I always had an uneasy feeling, for I knew that they disapproved of such carryings-on on the Sabbath. Or during harvest the whole family of the Amish farm east of us would appear in the dusty-golden wheatfield across from the house, the bearded men swinging scythes while the women and older children tied the grain and stacked it into sheaves. The youngest ones brought water and carried files to sharpen the gleaming blades when they became dull. These graceful, quiet movements across the road contrasted strangely with the commotion of tractor and combine moving through my uncle's fields in a cloud of dust and chaff. Or sometimes I'd go with my grandfather to the auction sales in the county, and always there would be knots of stern, work-hardened men, with small boys clinging wide-eyed to their hands. My grandfather, who had been raised by an Amish family, would often join them, speaking in dialect. The Amish boys and I would eye each other suspiciously until at last my grandfather moved on.

But it was not until the summer when I was fifteen that I got a really close look at a strict Amish family. Since cultivating with a team is much slower than with a tractor, the Amish sometimes fell behind in their work during the hot, moist July days when weeds seem to appear between the rows of beans or corn almost over night. To catch up, they would occasionally borrow a tractor, complete with driver, from their more modern neighbors. One evening Mr. Mast, who owned the Amish farm south of us, stopped by to ask my uncle if he might borrow our John Deere and me to cultivate one of his bean fields. The next morning I chugged noisily into their farmyard. The John Deere was the first internal combustion machine to enter their premises since the threshers had come the previous fall, so the whole family was turned out to greet me. Everyone except old Mrs. Mast, anyway. Most of the sect regarded only rubber-tired machines as instruments of the Devil, but she was one of the more strict believers who felt that even the steel-wheeled threshing machine was "worldly." Mr. Mast's oldest son, Freddie, later told me that she was upstairs pray-

ing, and had not said a word to any of the men since she found out they had borrowed the John Deere. She thought they had put her soul in jeopardy by bringing that "infernal machine" on the place.

But all of the others were there. Three generations were represented; old Mr. Mast in his black, broad-brimmed hat, white beard resting on the bib-front of his faded blue overalls; his two sons, the married one black-bearded while the other remained clean-shaven, according to custom; his two daughters and his daughter-in-law; and the four grandchildren. No one said much when I stopped in the driveway. There were a few "Hello's" and several nods, while the little ones hid behind the grown-ups' skirts and trouser legs and sneaked long searching looks at me and the tractor. Two big collies ambled up to the tractor and sniffed suspiciously at the big, mud-caked rubber tires.

Freddie was in the barn hitching up a team to cultivate the field next to mine. Finally he led the big Percherons out into the bright sunlight of early morning, and I followed him down the lane. The horses shied, white-eyed, at the roar of the John Deere behind them, so I slowed down to a crawl and let them move out ahead. Finally my guide paused and waved me into a field on my right while he turned into the one across the way. I peeled off my shirt and started on my first trip down the bright green rows, watching the dull brown soil turn shiny-black as the cultivator blades tore into it. With the sun beating down on my back and shoulders and the heat and smell of the exhaust blowing back into my face, it seemed like any normal day on my uncle's place. I drove without stopping until mid-morning, when I heard a shout over the noise of the tractor. Killing the engine, I saw the old man moving towards me through the sudden silence, with his smallest grandson tagging along at his heels as he picked his way over the fresh furrows. They were still a good distance away, so I turned and looked towards the field across the lane while I waited for them to reach me. Freddie was riding on the primitive cultivator as it lurched and bucked through the sun-caked topsoil, and I could faintly hear the creaking and jingling of the harness as the horses leaned into it, the sweat turning white and foamy where the leather rubbed their backs. One of the collies roamed the field in front of them in a lazy search for rabbits or field mice. The shimmering of heat-wave gave the scene an appearance of unreality, as if I were watching its reflection on the still surface of a farm

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## Book Reviews

*The Lancaster Mennonite Conference History and Background.* By Ira D. Landis. Printed by the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa., 1956. Pp. 114. \$50.

The Christian Nurture Committee of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference has sponsored this 114-page booklet, *The Lancaster Mennonite Conference History and Background*, written by Ira D. Landis, chairman of the Committee.

In the preface the author calls the book a "severely abridged textbook" and explains that it was written and published "since this story of the background of our history is not completely delineated on the pages of any English text, since a quarter of a century has elapsed following the publication of M. G. Weaver's *Lancaster Conference History*, and since our history has not been available for the increasing number of schools calling for this almost unknown choice history of the past . . ."

Approximately half of the book (Chapters I-VI) deals with the beginnings of Mennonitism—including both the Swiss Brethren in Switzerland and the Mennonites in Holland—with a discussion of their distinctive doctrines, their persecution, and evaluation by outsiders. Subsequent migrations within Europe and to the New World, culminating in the first permanent settlement—in the heart of the present Lancaster County—are outlined.

Included in the other half of the book (Chapters VII-XI) are descriptions of the first meeting of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference, activities of the Mennonites during the French and Indian Wars and the Revolutionary War, migrations from Lancaster County, the establishment of meetinghouses, and the beginning of the use of the English language, Sunday schools, and revival meetings. Especially interesting during the early period is the influence of Mennonite ideals in the writing of the State Constitution of Pennsylvania. The author mentions several divisions including those that resulted in small Mennonite groups, such as the Wenger Mennonites and the Horning Mennonites, that still exist in Lancaster County. The author then shows the expansion of Conference activities, including the organization of youth groups, old people's homes, an orphanage, a high school, elementary schools, and local and foreign missions.

The author's method of documentation in this book consists of briefly identifying sources and page numbers in the text itself rather than in footnotes. The book includes a

rather complete index and a bibliography.

At the end of each chapter is a list of questions for review and research, the answers to some of which are found in the text itself. Further research in outside sources would be necessary to answer others. These questions would probably be helpful if the book were used in a classroom situation. The book is appropriately illustrated with photographs of several Lancaster Conference leaders and a number of historic buildings, both in Lancaster County and in Europe.

While the book by its title is local in its scope, yet it should possess an appeal for Mennonites everywhere and, one suspects, to many outside of the Mennonite circle who are interested in history.

The author has been a very active student of Mennonite history and has done much historical research on the local level. It is hoped that this publication will not exhaust his contributions to Mennonite historical lore.

The reviewer is certain that the Mennonite reading public would be interested in having, from the pen of Ira D. Landis, a full-scale history of the Lancaster Conference, replete with facts and details from the exhaustive and careful research which this author has made on the subject.

—Samuel S. Wenger

*Forks Mennonite Church, A Centennial History 1857-1957.* By John C. Wenger, Conference Historian. Privately printed at Goshen, Indiana, 1957. Pp. 30.

This local church history, a treatment of the founding and the later life of the Forks Mennonite Church in Lagrange County, Indiana, is well written and an excellent example of its kind. Factual, including a list of ministers, and fourteen pages of photographs, it brings together a congregational history which church members, even if they are not particularly historically minded, can read and appreciate. The brochure grew from a talk given by the author at the time of the anniversary, but it is also an installment of a larger work in progress, *The Mennonites of Indiana and Michigan*, which he hopes to publish in 1959 (p. 15).

Many congregations in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, and points farther west are currently reaching the century mark of their history. This example ought to be a stimulus for other congregations to write their history before records and memories are further defaced by time.

I. B. H.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JOSEPH SOHM

(Continued from Page 1)

taining the history of the faith and doctrines of the Mennonite Church, from the days of the apostles down to 1606 [1660].

Mr. Sohm, after this enormous task was completed, became, so to speak, a more enthusiastic and devoted Christian than ever before. No doubt the translation of the history of God's people in these early centuries, their persecutions and sufferings, with their faithfulness and their devotion and steadfastness, made him stronger, more steadfast and more (devoted) than before, and he began to preach the gospel. [He] held meetings for a long time every evening in a building on the east side of Main street between Lexington and High streets [in Elkhart] and did much good to those who came to hear him.

Later he went back to New York City, where he again engaged in the printing business, and a flying report went the rounds that he again returned to the Catholic Church and became a devout worshipper in that faith. He died on March 12th in 1902, seventeen years ago, leaving a wife and two sons and one daughter to mourn his death. Peace to his ashes.

—Manuscript in the John F. Funk collection in the Archives of the Mennonite Church.

*Twenty-Five Chapters on the Shenandoah Valley.* By John W. Wayland. The Shenandoah Publishing House, Inc., Strasburg, Virginia, 1957. Pp. 14, 434. \$6.50.

This new, sizable work from Dr. Wayland substantially increases his contribution to the study of local history in the Shenandoah Valley. He calls this book "a topical history of the Valley." It is no sense a repeat performance but rather a filling in, a highlighting of subjects which he did not expand in his former works. Attention is given primarily to the pre-Civil War period, followed by a concise account of the War in the Valley. The Mennonite references, as in most of Wayland's books, are numerous. The Funk printing office, the Mennonite interest in music, and a study of Christian Newcomer's journal (Lancaster Mennonite turned United Brethren in Christ, who made 53 preaching trips into the Valley, according to Wayland) are some of the items of interest to Mennonites.

I. B. H.



## THE WANDERING SOUL

(Continued from Page 4)

9. 1839. Die wandelnde Seele . . . J. Howe at Philadelphia for G. W. Mentz and Son at Philadelphia.
10. 1843. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Mentz and Rovoudt at Philadelphia.
11. 1847. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Mentz and Rovoudt at Philadelphia.
12. 1850. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Wm. G. Mentz at Philadelphia.
13. No date. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Wm. G. Mentz at Philadelphia.
14. No date. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Neue (12te Auflage). Schäfer und Koradi at Philadelphia.
15. No date. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Neue (13te) Auflage. Schäfer und Koradi at Philadelphia.
16. No date. Die wandelnde Seele . . . Neue (16te) Auflage. Schäfer und Koradi at Philadelphia.
17. 1919. Die wandelnde Seele . . . die vierzehnte Auflage. Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania.
18. 1952. Die wandelnde Seele . . . die 15. Auflage. By Light and Hope Publications, Berne, Indiana, for J. A. Raber, Baltic, Ohio.

## II. Editions in the English Language

19. 1834. The Wandering Soul; Dialogues between the Wandering Soul and Adam, Noah, and Simon Cleophas. Comprising a History of the World, Sacred and Profane. . . . By John Philip Schabalie. Originally written in the Holland Language; Translated into German by Bernhart B. Brechbill. Translated from the Fourth American Edition into English, by I. Daniel Rupp. Author "Der Maertyr Geschichte," &c &c. To which a Chronological Table and a Copious Index are Added. Adapted to the Work. Second and Improved Edition with Engravings. L. Johnson at Philadelphia for I. D. Rupp and John Winebrenner at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.
20. 1834. The wandering Soul . . . Fourth American Edition. L. Johnson at Philadelphia for I. Daniel Rupp at Carlisle, Pa.
21. 1838. The Pilgrim Soul; or, Dialogues between the Pilgrim Soul and Adam, Noah and Simon Cleophas . . . Johnston and Stockton, Pittsburgh, Pa.
22. 1840. The Wandering Soul . . . J. V. Rigden at Woodstock, Virginia.
23. 1840. The Wandering Soul . . . Second and improved edition. L. Johnson at Philadelphia for I. D. Rupp at Harrisburg, Pa.
24. 1841. The Wandering Soul . . . The Virginian Office at Winchester, Virginia.
25. 1859. The Wandering Soul . . . New Revised Edition, with Engravings. Theo. F. Scheffer at Harrisburg.
26. 1874. The Wandering Soul . . . Second Revised English Edition. John Baer's Sons, Lancaster, Pa.

Then again brotherly love is shown in this, that among ourselves we serve one another by benevolently reaching out our hand, not only with spiritual, but also with temporal gifts, which we have received from God.

—Dirk Philips

## "WALK YE . . .

(Continued from Page 6)

pond. I turned back and saw the erect old man, wisps of his beard waving in the fitful summer wind, and the boy striding along beneath a round, narrow-brimmed straw hat. The boy was carrying a stone jug and a tin cup, hugging the jug to him with both arms as he stepped across the rows. As they neared the tractor he drew shyly back behind his grandfather and nervously studied the ground. The old man smiled up at me and asked me in his heavy accent if everything were going well. I nodded self-consciously and commented that there were remarkably few rocks in the field. He laughed and told me that he had helped his father pull them out nearly fifty years before. The boy had filled the tin cup from the jug, and he handed it up to me, squinting into the sun. It was buttermilk, fresh from the churn. When I had drained the cup I handed it back down to him. Mr. Mast was critically examining the turned earth between the rows of beans, and, after a time, remarked that the tractor was fast and did a good job. He looked at the John Deere and resignedly sighed and shook his head. Then he called his grandson and stood back while I started the engine. As I drove off, they watched for a moment, and then turned back toward the house. I thought of the old man as a boy, helping his father pry the boulders from the ground, and of the little boy, outwardly a perfect replica of his grandfather as he had been many years before, and roaming the same fields. I wondered how much longer they could hold out against the "worldly" ways they had thus far rejected.

I finished the field just before noon, and pulled out into the hot and dusty lane. Closing the gate behind me, I drove toward the house, enjoying the satisfied feeling, that comes with the end of a job, and looking forward to spending the afternoon over at the gravel pit, swimming and fishing. When I reached the farmyard, one of the girls ran out of the house and motioned for me to stop. I squirmed into my shirt and followed her into the bare and immaculate kitchen. The walls and ceiling were painted a dull white, like every other room in the house, and a kerosene lamp hung over the table, suspended by a brass chain. An old wood-burning stove filled one corner of the room, with flames flickering yellow and orange through the translucent mica panes in the fire-door. There were no curtains at the windows, and no decoration of any kind anywhere in the room. Mrs. Mast and her daughters were

preparing dinner, moving quietly and efficiently and occasionally exchanging rapid-fire phrases in dialect. When the old Mrs. Mast saw me, she led me out to the porch and loaded me down with boxes of fresh raspberries and jars of preserves, made that morning and left there to cool. She asked me to take them to my grandmother. I thanked her and walked out to the tractor. Evidently she had overcome some of her fear of the John Deere, for as I started down the road she stood motionless by the gate in her blue dress and white cap, shading her eyes with her hand as she watched me go.

The last time I went to the farm, I was surprised to see two new tractors and a combine sitting in front of the Mast's barn, and a new Ford parked in the driveway. My uncle told me that after old Mr. Mast had died the previous Fall, Freddie immediately joined the Mennonite Church and modernized the farm. His brother Ivan was working in town as an auto salesman. Only old Mrs. Mast remained true to the old ways. I feel sorry for her, forced to live out her days in an atmosphere which she considers sinful and "worldly". But that's the way it is in many of the old Amish families in the County. The young are being held back by the old, but the latter know that it's just a matter of time before the forces of youth and progress will win out, and the sect will melt away and become history.

You hardly ever see a buggy on the pike any more. It may be due to progress, but it still seems sort of a shame.

(From *The University of Virginia Magazine*, Easter, 1957, by permission.)

The sixth ordinance which Christ has instituted for his congregation is the keeping of all his commandments, for he demands of all his disciples a godly life, that they walk according to the gospel, openly confess the truth before men, deny self, and faithfully follow in his footsteps, voluntarily take up the cross, forsake all things, and earnestly seek first the Kingdom of God and all his righteousness, the unseen heavenly things, and eternal life. . . . This is the heavenly philosophy, which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, received of his Father, brought down from heaven, and taught his disciples. This is the counsel and will of God, the saving doctrine of Jesus Christ, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

—Dirk Philips